

DECLARATIONS OF THE LXIX GENERAL CHAPTER 2019

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PRESENTATION

“Shaping the Future of Hospitality” was the theme chosen for the 69th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, which was held in Rome from 14 January to 5 February 2019. It was attended by 78 Brothers Vocals and 23 Co-workers from different Provinces and entities of the Order, a number of Brothers as invited guests, and the Co-workers working with the secretariat to ensure the smooth running of the proceedings, handle the communications and other important logistical aspects.

The Chapter was a great experience of fraternity, universality and hospitality for more than three weeks, respecting the plural and multicultural nature of our Order. It was a time of spiritual discernment as we jointly sought the responses we have to make in order to address the new challenges facing our Order today, to continue shaping the future of Hospitality. This is our mission: to build and shape. We have good “bonding agents” in the charism received by St John of God. Our task is to enliven it, thanking our Lord every day for the precious gift of Hospitality which he is giving us, and renewing it constantly, faithful to the Spirit and to our Founder. Passion for the love of Christ and compassion for the suffering and needy are the keys to ensuring that the new wine of hospitality will find new wine-skins to be poured into.

One of the highlights of the Chapter was the private Audience which Pope Francis granted our Order on 1 February. All the Capitulars and other Brothers from the Rome Communities and the General Curia Co-workers and a few other people with us, attended the Audience. The Pope offered his hospitality, receiving us in his own home, and stood very close to us, listening, personally greeting each one of us, and posing with all of us for photographs. We gave him a small gift – a pomegranate tree. It was a gesture symbolising our Order, which we asked him to have planted in the Vatican Gardens, to ensure the permanent presence of the tree of Hospitality.

At the meeting, Pope Francis addressed a profound and hospitaller message to us. I urge you all to read it and reread it, meditate on it and share it with the Brothers and Co-workers in order to extract its very essence for our benefit. This document also includes his Message which hinges around three fundamental attitudes: discernment, care-hospitality and the shared mission.

The Decorations published here are taken from the documents and the crucial moments we experienced at the General Chapter, in addition to other documents on the General Government’s plans for the new Sexennium:

- The Prior General’s opening address to the Brothers and Co-workers
- This Prior General’s Report on the Sexennium
- The General Chapter *Instrumentum laboris*
- The Declaration of the Co-workers attending the General Chapter
- The Prior General’s address at the Audience with the Holy Father.
- The Message of Pope Francis at the Audience for the General Chapter.

- Closing address of the new Superior General.
- Lines of action for the new Sexennium 2019-2025
- Amendments to the General Statutes approved by the Chapter.
- Programme for the Sexennium 2019-2025

All these documents and declarations represent the fruit of the General Chapter in each of its phases: during the preparation, during the Chapter itself and its projection into the future. I urge all the Provinces, all the Brothers and Co-workers and the whole Family of St John of God to carefully study them. They set out the ideas and the guidelines for the future of our Institution. They must also be used as a benchmark for the life of the whole Order, when preparing, celebrating and planning the forthcoming Provincial Chapters, and for the next six years in general.

Studying these documents will reveal the lines of action and the fundamental issues on which you have to work and animate over the coming years: the Brothers' spiritual and fraternal life, and initial and continuing formation, to which we must pay greater attention; leadership in every area of the Order's life, in the Provinces and Communities, in the Apostolic Centres and in Formation; strengthening and nurturing the Hospitaller Family in the broadest sense of the term, seeking the most appropriate place for each member, and opening up new places in the governance and responsibilities of the Order at every level. Studying and discerning our structures is another core element which will be driven forward in the coming years in order to discover the most appropriate structure for the present moment, consistently at all times with the identity and the specific character of our Institution. We want to see more intense animation of all these matters at the regional level through the Regional Commissions, to be able to pursue them more closely, and increasingly more in keeping with the cultural and social situation of each region and country in which the Order is present.

We have now set out along the new Sexennium which will take us up to 2025. It is a time we must exploit and see as an opportunity to respond to our Lord's permanent call to make hospitality new and visible in our age, hopefully, faithfully and trustingly in Our Lord. All the Brothers and Co-workers are being called to commit themselves to this new period by reaching out beyond ourselves and our limitations and difficulties, as Pope Francis has reminded us in his message to the General Chapter, so that we can continue carrying and making present God's merciful and never-ending love for the poor and the needy, as our Founder, St John of God, has taught us.

Brother Jesús Etayo
Superior General



ROMA
2019
Capitolo Generale

Costruendo il **futuro** dell'Ospitalità
Shaping the **future** of Hospitality
Construyendo el **futuro** de la Hospitalidad
Die **Zukunft** der Hospitalität gestalten
Construire le **futur** de l'Hospitalité
Kształtując **przyszłość** Szpitalnictwa

14 January - 5 February 2019

PARTICIPANTS

| GENERAL CURIA | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | Bro. Jesús ETAYO, priest |
| 2 | Bro. Rudolf KNOPP |
| 3 | Bro. Giampietro LUZZATO |
| 4 | Bro. Benigno RAMOS, priest |
| 5 | Bro. Pascal AHODEGNON |
| ROMAN PROVINCE | |
| 6 | Bro. Gerardo D'AURIA |
| 7 | Bro. Pietro CICINELLI |
| 8 | Bro. Roque JUSAY |
| LOMBARDY-VENETO PROVINCE | |
| 9 | Bro. Massimo VILLA, priest |
| 10 | Bro. Marco FABELLO |
| 11 | Bro. Dario VERMI, priest |
| FRENCH PROVINCE | |
| 12 | Bro. Paul-Marie TAUFANA |
| 13 | Bro. Alain-Samuel JEANCLER |
| 14 | Bro. Mathieu SISAHAYE |
| AUSTRIAN PROVINCE | |
| 15 | Bro. Saji MULLANKUZHY |
| 16 | Bro. Martin MACEK |
| 17 | Bro. Paulus KOHLER |
| BAVARIAN PROVINCE | |
| 18 | Bro. Benedikt HAU |
| 19 | Bro. Seraphim SCHORER |
| 20 | Bro. Thomas VÄTH, priest |
| ANDALUSIAN PROVINCE | |
| 21 | Bro. José Antonio SORIA CRAUS |
| 22 | Bro. Ángel LÓPEZ MARTÍN |
| 23 | Bro. Julián SANCHEZ BRAVO |
| POLISH PROVINCE | |
| 24 | Bro. Lukas DMOWSKY |
| 25 | Bro. Eligiusz MUCHA |
| 26 | Bro. Hubert MATUSIEWICZ, priest |
| 27 | Bro. Franciszek Salezy CHMIEL |
| PORTUGUESE PROVINCE | |
| 28 | Bro. Vitor LAMEIRAS MONTEIRO |
| 29 | Bro. Alberto Paulo MADUREIRA MENDES, priest |
| 30 | Bro. José Augusto GASPAS LOURO |

| ARAGONESE PROVINCE | |
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| 31 | Bro. José Luis FONSECA BRAVO |
| 32 | Bro. Joaquim ERRA i MAS |
| 33 | Bro. Miguel MARTÍN RODRIGO, priest |
| 34 | Bro. Eduardo RIBES ARGENTE |
| CASTILLIAN PROVINCE | |
| 35 | Bro. Amador FERNÁNDEZ FERNÁNDEZ, priest |
| 36 | Bro. José María BERMEJO DE FRUTOS, priest |
| 37 | Bro. José María CHÁVARRI IMAÑA |
| 38 | Bro. Miguel Ángel VARONA ALONSO |
| COLOMBIA PROVINCE | |
| 39 | Bro. Daniel Alberto MARQUEZ BOCANEGRA |
| 40 | Bro. Anyelo RIVEROS PICO |
| 41 | Bro. Juan Carlos TOVAR HUERTAS |
| OCEANIA PROVINCE | |
| 42 | Bro. Timothy GRAHAM |
| 43 | Bro. Joseph SMITH |
| 44 | Bro. Brian O'DONNELL |
| UNITED STATES PROVINCE | |
| 45 | Bro. Stephen DE LA ROSA |
| 46 | Bro. Edward Francis MCENROE |
| 47 | Bro. Pablo Eduardo LOPEZ ESTRELLA |
| VIETNAM PROVINCE | |
| 48 | Bro. Joseph VUONG HOAI DUC |
| 49 | Bro. Peter PHAM VAN PHU |
| 50 | Bro. Antony NGUYEN CHAN HONG, priest |
| 51 | Bro. Matthew TRAN DOAN PHI |
| N. SOUTH AMERICA PROVINCE | |
| 52 | Bro. William PINTADO SAAVEDRA |
| 53 | Bro. César ARROYO GUTIERREZ, priest |
| 54 | Bro. Isidro VASQUEZ ZAMORA |
| GENERAL DELEGATION OF MEXICO | |
| 55 | Bro. José Merced ULLOA GUTIÉRREZ |
| 56 | Bro. Gudiel SANCHEZ CHACON |
| S. SOUTH AMERICA PROVINCE | |
| 57 | Bro. Erik CASTILLO CARREÑO |
| 58 | Bro. Hermit AGUAYO GARCES |
| 59 | Bro. Luis SANCHEZ MIRANDA |
| INDIAN PROVINCE | |
| 60 | Bro. Yanka SHARMA |
| 61 | Bro. Savio PADINJAREKOOT |
| 62 | Bro. George KIZHAKKEKARA, priest |
| KOREAN PROVINCE | |
| 63 | Bro. Ricardo Pampuri KO |
| 64 | Bro. John JUNG, priest |
| 65 | Bro. John CONWAY |
| AFRICAN PROVINCE OF ST. AUGUSTINE | |
| 66 | Bro. Bartholomew KAMARA |
| 67 | Bro. André SENE, priest |
| 68 | Bro. Michael KOROMA |

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| 69 | Bro. Linus TANGU |
| WEST EUROPEAN PROVINCE | |
| 70 | Bro. Donatus FORKAN |
| 71 | Bro. Robert MOORE |
| 72 | Bro. Ronan LENNON |
| AFRICAN PROVINCE OF ST. RICHARD PAMPURI | |
| 73 | Bro. Virgile Rodrigue DJITRINO |
| 74 | Bro. Boniface SAMBIENI |
| 75 | Bro. Parfait TCHAOU |
| GOOD SHEPHERD IN N.A. PROVINCE | |
| 76 | Bro. Justin HOWSON |
| 77 | Bro. David LYNCH |
| 78 | Bro. Tom OSORIO |

CO-WORKERS

| CO-WORKERS | | |
|------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Mr. Pietro CACCIARELLI | General Curia |
| 2 | Mr. Xavier POMES | General Curia |
| 3 | Mr. Antonio BARNABA | Roman Province |
| 4 | Mr. Giovanni Maria SORO | Lombardy-Veneto Province |
| 5 | Mr. Philippe GIRARD | French Province |
| 6 | Mr. Andreas WEINMÜLLER | Austrian Province |
| 7 | Mr. Hans EMMERT | Bavarian Province |
| 8 | Mr. Miguel SÁNCHEZ-DALP JIMENÉZ | Andalusian Province |
| 9 | Mr. Tomasz PÓŁCHŁOPEK | Polish Province |
| 10 | Mr. Eduardo LEMOS | Portuguese Province |
| 11 | Mrs. Inmaculada ROIG COSCULLUELA | Aragonese Province |
| 12 | Mrs. Maria Paz APARICIO GARRIDO | Castilian Province |
| 13 | Mr. Norman DOLLAR | United States Province |
| 14 | Mrs. Carmen Flores HUAPAYA | N. South America Province |
| 15 | Mr. Jonathan HERNANDEZ COSIO | Gen. Del. of Mexico & C.A. |
| 16 | Mrs. Silvia Noemi OGER | S. South America Province |
| 17 | Mr. Shirish DINGRE | Indian Province |
| 18 | Mrs. Lydia KIM | Korean Province |
| 19 | Mr. Valentine BRUKU | African Province of St. Augustine |
| 20 | Mr. Conor McCARTHY | West European Province |
| 21 | Mr. Baudoin MEDENOU | African Province of St. Richard P. |
| 22 | Mrs. Lenis Alexandra VELDERRAMA SANCHEZ | Colombia Province |
| 23 | Mrs. Judy BRINKMANN | Good Shepherd in N.A. Province |

FACILITATOR

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | Fr. David GLENDAY, MCCJ |
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SECRETARIAT

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | Bro. Gian Carlo LAPIC', priest | Secretary of the Chapter |
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| | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------|
| 3 | Mrs. Silvia FARINA | General Curia |
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| 4 | Mr. Klaus MUTSCHLECHNER | General Curia |
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LOGISTIC AND WEB SITE

| | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------|
| 5 | Mr. Augusto FABBRONI | General Curia |
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| 6 | Mr. Antoine SOUBRIER | France |
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BROTHERS INVITED

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 7 | Bro. Jairo Enrique URUETA BLANCO | Delegate for Latin America |
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| 8 | Bro. Elia TRIPALDI, priest | General Postulator |
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| 3 | Bro. Moises MARTIN BOSCA | Bureau of Missions and Int. Coop. |
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DISCERNMENT PHASE

| | |
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| 10 | Fr. Juan Carlos MARTOS, cmf |
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69th General Chapter

THE HOSPITALER ORDER OF ST JOHN OF GOD

OPENING ADDRESS

Brother Jesús Etayo

Superior General

Rome, 15 January 2019

1. Introduction

Dear Brothers, welcome all of you to the 69th General Chapter of our Order which is beginning today in this House of the Dehonian Fathers in Rome, where we shall be spending the next three weeks, discerning, sharing and taking the most appropriate decisions for our beloved Order in the coming years.

I trust you all feel at home in Rome and in the house. We have tried to get everything ready to create the environment we need to help us help perform our mission here under the best possible conditions. We beg your indulgence in advance for your understanding if you encounter any shortcomings, and we will do our best to do whatever we can to ensure that all is in order and put you at your ease.

In my letter convoking the Chapter, I said this:

“It will be a spiritual event of the greatest importance to our Order, in which, through communion, collegiality and responsible accountability, we will be called upon to take stock of the state of our Institute and plan the future of the charism and mission, faithful to what the Holy Spirit is asking of us at the present time and for the future.”¹

This is certainly a spiritual event, an event of the Holy Spirit, to whom we must listen in order to discern the pathways along which the Order must travel in future. You will be hearing me repeat this several times over the coming days. We are being called to experience this spiritual event in a spirit of *communion and brotherhood*, because this meeting is our Order’s supreme expression of communion; in a spirit of *collegiality*, because we have all been called to take part, and to give the best of ourselves; and with a sense of *responsibility*, for it is our Lord who is asking this of us, and this Chapter is being asked to lay down guidelines and take decisions that will leave their mark on the life of the Order over the coming years.

The theme proposed by the General Definitory is “*Shaping the future of Hospitality*”. We will certainly be speaking at length about our future, on the understanding that it is linked to the

¹ Brother Jesús Etayo. Letter convoking the 69th General Chapter. Roma, 2018

present and, of course, rooted in the past. But it would be desirable for us *to make a quantum leap forward* to ensure, as I will be repeating many times here, that *it must not be seen as just one more Chapter*. You all know that we have taken up this theme as a matter of priority in the final years of the Sexennium, very mindful of the state of the world, the Church and our Order, and of the challenges that we have to tackle. This General Chapter is taking place at an important juncture in the life of our Institute, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will assist us so that we can faithfully respond to what is being demanded of us.

At we reach the end of the Sexennium, I would like to thank Our Lord for His constant presence with me, especially in times of the greatest difficulty. I have tried to fulfil my mission with the highest sense of responsibility possible during these years. And I would like to thank Our Lady of the Patronage, Saint John of God and all our Saints and Beati who have guided me throughout this time, and all the Brothers and Co-workers who have accompanied me and helped me perform this mission. Without them, nothing would have been possible.

2. Travelling along pathways of hope and humility

I have experienced the past six years as a grace given by God, as a gift, and my first feelings are therefore of gratitude, as I have just said. Serving the Church and the Order is the project given to all of us, wherever we are needed. As I said the beginning of the Sexennium, this is how I took it on and this is how I have lived it, as a gift, as a service, and of course as a responsibility. This is what would like to personally highlight above all. Certainly there have been many sensitive times, and certain major difficulties which are only to be expected and form part of life, and in no way detract from what I have just said.

As this period ends, I would like to share a number of my own, very personal, thoughts with my Brothers, simply and fraternally, about the life of the Order.

Before I do, I wish to express my appreciation for the many positive things I have seen and experienced over these years in all the places where which the Order is present: the many social/health care and welfare projects of all kinds being implemented in every Province, the dedicated devotion shown by the Brothers and Co-workers to the neediest people; the expansion of regional and inter-Provincial collaboration; the many synergies generated by pooling the Order's vast potential in terms of Brothers and Co-workers; the impetus given to the Formation of Brothers and Co-workers (Schools of Hospitality), Research, Pastoral Care of the Sick, Bioethics, Voluntary Service and International Cooperation; great strides have been made in charismatic management; the witness borne by the commitment of our Brothers and Co-workers even to the point of sacrificing their lives during the Ebola epidemic in Africa; the testimony of the Hospitaller Family of St John of God their dedication to the poor and the excluded in widely differing situations, and so many other positive aspects that have given me a joyful sense of healthy pride at the response our Institution is making in the Church and in the world, further evidenced from the important social and church honours we have been awarded over the past few years. I believe

that we should all feel humbly proud of what we are, and of what we do, which must make us cherish our Order even more and to devote ourselves increasingly to enabling it to continue bearing the good fruits of Hospitality.

The Consecrated Life, specifically in our Order, is being lived today in widely differing contexts such that we must carefully examine all the local and regional situations while, at the same time, strengthening communion and universality to avoid over-fragmentation or losing our way. This is a dual requirement which is not always easy to accommodate, and poses a challenge to us.

We have a charism and a mission which are real treasure: Hospitality. I will be returning to this shortly. But this charism is something we carry with us *in clay jars*² and we must bear this carefully in mind. After witnessing the approaching decline in the number of Brothers in the Order for many years, it is now an evident fact, especially in Europe, with our high average age, and also in America. In Africa, the number of vocations is reaching quite acceptable levels, as is the case in the Asia-Pacific, albeit to different degrees in every Province, some of which are barely growing, if not actually declining. These are figures that we will be seeing in the reports you will hear later, and with which you are already familiar. Although statistics are not the most important consideration, we cannot ignore them. On the other hand, although in recent years we may have lost a number of our Apostolic Centres, many others have also been opened and it is evident that our apostolic work is more extensive than it has ever been before in the Order, and which we can continue to work on thanks to the presence of many thousands of Co-workers and Volunteers. Generally speaking, our Hospitaller Family of St John of God is performing a very important mission and is doing a great deal of good.

But we carry our treasure *in clay jars*. There are also a number of restrictions we have to bear in mind as major challenges we have to address: we must become increasingly more passionate about our vocation as Brothers; generally speaking, I believe that we have to plan our community life afresh; the Brothers continue to be weak with regard to many aspects of formation; there are some Brothers, particularly in certain Provinces, who never carry complete the role given to them and take on other responsibilities for which they do not have the necessary training, with all the consequences stemming from this; we need clearer guidelines and criteria for the mission of our Apostolic Centres and for the future, in every sense; a good many of them are administratively and economically weak; we have not given them the wherewithal to become more solid, and to improve the development and the structure of our Hospitaller Family.

One of the most urgent responses we have to make has to do with the life of the Brothers. I always say that therein lies the key to the future of our Institute. Thank God there are many Brothers who are true witnesses to hospitality and who live their religious consecration with great passion, and stand as an example to us all. But it is also true that we frequently find Brothers who are demotivated, weary, disoriented and basically unfocused in the way they live their vocation. It is very distressing to hear the criteria and views of some Brothers, and those they live by, far away

² Cfr. 2 Cor 4,7

from a consecrated life. And there are cases of Brothers with abuse and misconduct problems. Continuing formation is still very weak, as is community and fraternal life; the figure of the Superiors is also something we have to strengthen in general, and very often community life only exists as a pure formality, when it is not non-existent because of a shortage of Brothers, and for other reasons. Some Brothers are overburdened with work and with the mission, and neglect their spiritual and fraternal life. There are increasingly larger numbers of elderly and sick Brothers for whom we have to care with all the dedication they deserve.

I am concerned when I see that while some Provinces have greatly developed the mission and have many centres, they only have a tiny group of Brothers capable of taking on the responsibilities. If this situation does not radically change, and in the very near future, as is likely to be the case, who will take on this responsibility? Is anyone making plans for this? On the other hand, considering the complexity of our centres, the Brothers are becoming increasingly overburdened with responsibilities for our facilities, despite the huge support they receive from the Co-workers, without whom we could not even contemplate moving forward. But even with this, we are faced with a great challenge to which we must immediately respond. There are even Provinces with very few Brothers who have not been given adequate management training, and do not have a well-established group of Co-workers. These Provinces need a change of direction, without delay, for otherwise their continued existence will be in jeopardy. The fact is that, taking the Order as a whole, we have many Provinces, mostly with a very small number of Brothers, which requires us to rethink its canonical structure. The Provinces in the Order have always enjoyed great autonomy in the past, and this has brought many positive results. But everything has its limits, and this is also an area on which we have to reflect and take the most appropriated decisions, if the Order is to avoid encountering even greater difficulties in the next few years.

These are just a few examples that reveal our limitations and the challenges which we have to address. I am mentioning them not so much to dwell on the difficulties, but to make us aware of them so that we can clearly see the real state of the Order, and above all to enable us to pass through this moment in our history with humility. As I see it, this is the human and spiritual attitude which have to adopt as our own. That, at least, is the way I see it. We have to be humble, and although we have a great charism and a great gift, we are living through *times in which we are hoping for better things to come, something new*, which we must live through *with the hope and courage of the Gospel*,³ but also with *the necessary humility*, the humility of the poor in spirit of the Beatitudes,⁴ with that of the *anawim*,⁵ the poor of the Bible, and of Mary in the Magnificat,⁶ who only found their riches and their hope in God. Let us be humble, Brothers, let us recognise our weaknesses and our limitations in every area of life, and let us stop thinking of the Order as a strong institution, built on a rock, for this is no longer the case. With healthy humility, even

³ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate*, Vatican City, 2018, "Holiness is also *parrhesía*: it is boldness, an impulse to evangelize and to leave a mark in this world. To allow us to do this, Jesus himself comes and tells us once more, serenely yet firmly: "Do not be afraid" (*Mk* 6:50). "I am with you always, to the end of the world" (*Mt* 28:20)."

⁴ Cf. *Mt* 5,1.12

⁵ Cf *Ps* 9,35; 22,27; *Is* 61,1, *Jer* 20,13, *Zeph* 2,3.

⁶ Cf *Lk* 1,46-55.

humble pride and full of hope, we can make the responses being asked of us to take on the great challenges which I have just mentioned, and the many other ones which may arise.

3. The gift of Hospitality for the new times

Above and beyond the constraints and the challenges we face is our precious gift of hospitality,⁷ which we have received from our Lord in the spirit and the manner of St John of God, our Founder. A charism which God continues to give us with a mission to which He continues to send us: the mission of hospitality. This is the basis of our hope, and this is what underpins our project and its future.

St John of God started out in a very real and particular situation. His identification with the Christ of hospitality and his dedication to the suffering were so powerful that he amazed everyone, and this induced many of them to follow him. Starting with nothing, and for the love of God, he opened up a path of hope and life for all the sick, poor and needy people of Granada, firstly, and then the whole world.

With the normal ups and downs of history, this movement of hospitality has been recreated across the ages with the power and the passion of the Brothers and our Co-workers, by responding to the needs of the sick and the needy in every place, in every age and environment, thereby renewing the dream of St John of God *“to care for poor sick people as I wish”*.⁸

The charism of hospitality is what makes us strong. It is the wellspring at which we must quench our thirst to sustain our life, our Order and our Family. It comes from God, who enables us to sense and experience His merciful love for each and every one of us, and who sends us out to bear witness to it, and make it visible and real to others, particularly the sick and those most in need. Our document *“The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St John of God. The Spirituality of the Order”*⁹ and many others, beautifully sum up⁹ the origins, the sense, and the topical relevance of our charismatic patrimony of hospitality.

Hospitality is our treasure, our story. It is a living and still highly topically relevant treasure in the world and in the Church. This is confirmed today by many theologians, philosophers, ethicists and social scientists.¹⁰ In today’s world, in every place, culture and social, political, economic and religious environment, hospitality has become a pre-eminent human, ethical, social, religious and of course Gospel-inspired category, an alternative to inequality, to rejecting the excluded,

⁷ Cf. Constitutions of the OHSJD, Art.2.

⁸ Cf. Castro p. 52

⁹ OHSJD General Curia, *The Path of Hospitality in the Manner of St John of God. The Spirituality of the Order*, Rome 2003

¹⁰ Cfr. Torralba, F. *Sobre la hospitalidad. Extraños y vulnerables como tú*. Madrid, 2003, págs.22-23

Cfr. Lévinas, E. *Totalidad e infinito*. Salamanca, 1977; *Ética e infinito*. Madrid, 1991.

Cfr. Bauman, Z, *Extraños llamando a la puerta*. Barcelona, 2016, págs. 68-69

Cfr. Cortina, A, *Aporofobia, el rechazo al pobre. Un desafío para la democracia*. Barcelona, 2017, págs. 166-168

Cfr. Duch, Ll. *El exilio de Dios*. Barcelona, 2017, págs 86-87 y 90

Caputo, J.D. *Después de la muerte de Dios. Conversaciones sobre religión, política y cultura*. Barcelona/Buenos Aires/México, 2010, pág. 123.

migrants and refugees, those who have been cast out of society because unable to keep pace with the competition, those abandoned to their fate due to a lack of resources, or to their ethnicity, colour or creed, people suffering from diseases, particularly those which are the most socially stigmatised, and an endless number of things we could add. Faced with all this, hospitality is raised on high as a call to take in everyone, the most disadvantaged, to respect them and treat them with dignity as our brothers and sisters, as sons and daughters of God. Following St John of God, we do this by vocation, abandoning all for this very purpose, consecrating ourselves totally to this mission, because we all feel that God is treating us in the same manner. We have so many wonderful examples of people to look up to, such as our Founder and the many Brothers who have been outstanding throughout this history of our Order, and still today. Hospitality continues to be as necessary today as it ever was.

It is on the basis of this treasure, of this story, that we must shape the Order today and for the future. We have to make it live on, and we have to tell the story in terms of the situation in which we have to live, to continue serving this treasure, offering our world the alternative of hospitality with all the modern media at our disposal, but always with the same core contents with which St John of God began it.

The General Chapter is the most important place to help the Order continue telling and living the story of hospitality wherever it is present anywhere in the world, faithful to the spirit of the charism and the mission. By doing so, hopefully, boldly and humbly, despite all the difficulties and constraints, we can continue building up the life of our Order and our Family. At this General Chapter we have to lay down criteria and broad guidelines to ensure that the treasure of hospitality which the Holy Spirit has gifted us, will remain alive, so that the story of hospitality in the manner of St John of God will faithfully continue to impassion new generations in our Family and live on in the Church and in society.

4. Shaping the future of hospitality: an experience of spiritual discernment

I believe that our General Chapter must be celebrated consistently with what I have just been saying. It is, as I have said, a *spiritual event*, and we must therefore celebrate it as an experience of discernment, listening to the Holy Spirit is saying to us and asking us to do for the future of our Order and our Family. Discernment also means taking decisions consistently with what the Holy Spirit is asking of us.

Discernment must be present in every stage of the Chapter, running through it, and as a methodology. This is why we have asked Father John Dardis and Father David Glenday to help us in this process, albeit briefly, so that we do not lose sight of the final goal which we are seeking to reach in the course of this Chapter, which we are asked to see in the following terms:

“It is an exercise in ecclesial discernment through which consecrated men and women are called to undergo new changes so that ideals and doctrine become real in our lives: systems, structures, *diakonia*, styles, relationships and language.”¹¹

Pope Francis forcefully stresses the need to nurture the habit of discernment:

“How can we know if something comes from the Holy Spirit or if it stems from the spirit of the world or the spirit of the devil? The only way is through discernment, which calls for something more than intelligence or common sense. It is a gift which we must implore. If we ask with confidence that the Holy Spirit grant us this gift, and then seek to develop it through prayer, reflection, reading and good counsel, then surely we will grow in this spiritual endowment.”¹² “Discernment is a supernatural gift, a grace... It requires no special abilities, nor is it only for the more intelligent or better educated. The Father readily reveals himself to the lowly (cf. *Mt* 11:25).”¹³

Listening to the Holy Spirit: this is our greatest need over the coming days. Let me quote Pope Francis again, with two texts to which I referred at the recent Provincial Chapters which I attended:

“The Chapter is the time for listening to the Lord Who speaks to us through signs of the times; a time for mutual listening and therefore of openness to what the Lord communicates to us through our brothers; time to serenely and without prejudice compare our projects with those of other people. All this requires openness of mind and heart. In this sense the Chapter is a good time to exercise the spirit of *exodus and hospitality*: coming out of oneself to welcome with joy the part of the truth that the other communicates to me, and to walk together towards the full truth, the only one that frees us (cf. John 8:32)... (The Chapter is the time for listening) Listening to the brothers, and sharing with them... Never tire of exercising continually the art of listening and sharing.”¹⁴ (I intend to apply the word “brothers” used here in a generic sense to include our Co-workers.

To achieve all this, we have to create and enter into a true climate of discernment in the way Pope Francis himself has described it, in order to listen and to continue following up what the Holy Spirit is asking of us in this particular moment in our life and in our Order:

“To this end it is necessary to maintain a climate of discernment , to recognise what belongs to the Spirit and what is contrary to Him. Before us there opens up a world of possibilities. The culture in which we are immersed presents all of them as valid, all of them as good, but if we do not want to fall victim to the culture of zapping and, at times, a

¹¹ CIVCSVA, *New Wine in New Wineskins*, Vatican City, 2017, Introduction

¹² Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate*, Vatican City, 2018, no.166.

¹³ *Idem* no. 170.

¹⁴ Cf. Pope’s Address to General Chapter of Sister Disciples of Divine Master. 22 May 2017

culture of death, we must increase our habitus of discernment. Never tire of asking, personally and in the community, “Lord, what do you want me to do?”, “What do you want us to do?”¹⁵

Discerning with the boldness of the Gospel, which is courageous and prudent at the same time, which does not paralyse us when difficulties arise, which is able to move mountains, walk on water, to take up the cross, and even embrace death, in the cause of Jesus, and of His Kingdom.

I urge you all over the coming days to enter into an experience of spiritual discernment so that by listening to the Holy Spirit we can come to terms with the many challenges facing us, anchored firmly to the power of our charism and showing the readiness and humility we need to change things that no longer reflect the true face of hospitality, and above all striving to convert and renew our consecrated life which has certainly been debilitated for so many reasons, not least by our own limitations.

I would like to remind you of the following words that I wrote in my letter of convocation to this general chapter:

“That demands the help of the whole Order and the whole Hospitaller Family of St John of God, so that we can move forward boldly and with more enlightenment regarding our future, with the answers that the Lord and the Church and society are asking of us. At the Chapter, resolutions and guidelines will be issued to guide the Order over the coming years, a new vision which will respond, faithfully to the hospitality of Saint John of God, to the many challenges thrown down to us by the present moment. Above all, we shall need criteria and guidelines to steer the life of our Institute and form the basis on which the new General Government can build in order to implement the Chapter decisions.”¹⁶

I expect, and greatly desire, this to be the case. I want the working document that has been prepared for the Chapter, and the methodology and everything else in general, to help all of us to have a genuine experience of spiritual discernment which will enable the Order to face up to and to shape the future, faithful to the Holy Spirit, our Founder and our history of hospitality.

5. Conclusion

I will not tire you any longer. We will be hearing many speeches in the coming days and I shall also be delivering my Sexennium report. I apologise if I shall sometimes repeat myself.

We have reached the end of the Sexennium. It is been a very intense period, which I have evaluated positively, in which we have tried to place everything we have at the service of the Order with the greatest sense of responsibility. I have personally been able to thoroughly acquaint

¹⁵ Idem

¹⁶ Brother Jesús Etayo, General Chapter Letter of convocation, Rome 2018

myself with the Order and it has certainly enabled me to grow as a person and as a Brother of St John of God. There have been far more wonderful and positive moments, but I cannot deny the fact that there have also been more difficult and complicated moments which I have only been able to deal with thanks to Our Lord's help, and that of the Brothers. They have been six years that have flown by, but also six years full of life, experiences, encounters, and of course problems, but above all, years of growth in hospitality. These six years have seen many changes in the world, in the Church, and in the Order.

As I said at the beginning, I give thanks to Our Lord, Our Lady of the Patronage, Saint John of God and all our Saints and Beati for their unfailing help in serving and exercising my responsibilities as Prior General.

I would also wish to thank the General Councillors, Brothers Rudolf Knopp, Giampietro Luzzato, Benigno Ramos and Pascal Ahodegnon, for their support and their work. They have shared this responsibility with me, and have been of great help to me over the years. I thank you for standing by my side and for your understanding, and I thank you for the fine service you have rendered to the Order on so many occasions.

I would also like to thank Brother André Sène, the Secretary and Procurator General, for his good service which is so important for the smooth running of the Curia and the Order. I thank Brother Elia Tripaldi, the Postulator General, Brother Moisés Martin, the Director of the Missions and International Cooperation Office, Brother Innocenzo Fornaciari, the Superior of the General Curia Community, and all the Brothers belonging to this Community and all the staff of the General Curia. All together, we have endeavoured to embody the spirit of the Hospitaller Family of St John of God, and you have all been a real gift to me, and of great support in enabling me to carry forward my mission of animating and governing the Order.

Obviously there are many other people I should be thanking for their support, and their work and service to the Order. I shall do so in my Sexennium report, to avoid repeating myself.

To all of you, many, many thanks. I apologise for my shortcomings, because I have many limitations, and I have certainly made mistakes on many occasions. I apologise to the whole Order for what I have failed to do well and for my errors, particularly to individual people and the whole of our Family. All I can say is that I have acted at all times seeking to do what is best for the Order and for everyone, and in all instances my mistakes may be put down to my limitations.

My Dear Brothers, we are beginning the General Chapter which is a pinnacle moment in our Order's life, an opportunity gifted to us by Our Lord to renew our Institute and drive it forward, and above all hospitality. I am sure that we shall all be putting everything we are into ensuring that this Chapter will produce the basis for shaping a renewed Order, which is faithful to the spirit and to the manner of St John of God.

I wish you all a fruitful General Chapter, and may Our Lord and St John of God help us to give of best for the good of the Order and of our Hospitaller Family.

69th GENERAL CHAPTER

WELCOME ADDRESS TO THE CO-WORKERS

Brother Jesús Etayo
Rome, 21 January, 2019

1. Dear Co-workers,

Speaking on my own behalf, and that of the Capitulars Brothers, I welcome you all to Rome to take part in the Chapter sessions beginning today and until lunchtime on Friday the 20th. We are grateful to you all for having taken up our invitation, acting on a proposal of the Provincial Superiors and their Councils and the General Delegation of the Order. For many of you, it has involved a long journey and for all of you it means sacrificing yourselves to be with us, away from your families, for a few days. I therefore hope that it will prove to be a positive experience for you all, and trust that you will feel comfortable and at home with us during your stay.

2. In my letter of convocation, I said of the General Chapter, that, "It will be a spiritual event of the greatest importance to our Order, in which, through communion, collegiality and responsible accountability, we will be called upon to take stock of the state of our Institute and plan the future of the charism and mission, faithful to what the Holy Spirit is asking of us at the present time and for the future."¹

We want this to be an experience of discernment which will enable us to listen to what the Holy Spirit is telling us, so that we can find out what pathways the Order and the whole Saint John of God family is being called to travel along in the future, responding to the challenges we are facing today. This is why we have chosen as our theme for the Chapter, "*Shaping the future of Hospitality*".

Listening to the Spirit: this is what we need most of all over the coming days. I would like to cite the words of Pope Francis which I mentioned the other day in my Opening Address to the Chapter:

"The Chapter is the time for listening to the Lord Who speaks to us through signs of the times; a time for mutual listening and therefore of openness to what the Lord communicates to us through our brothers; time to serenely and without prejudice compare our projects with those of other people. All this requires openness of mind and heart. In this sense the Chapter is a good time to exercise the spirit of exodus and hospitality: coming out of oneself to welcome with joy the part of the truth that the other communicates to me, and to walk together towards the full truth, the only one that frees us (cf. John 8:32)... (The Chapter is a time for) listening to the brothers, and sharing with them... Never tire of exercising continually the art of listening and sharing."² (I intend to apply the word "brothers" used here in a generic sense to include our Co-workers.

3. The discernment which we are being asked to undertake is an exercise that has to be based on our present situation, and on our strengths and our weaknesses, and the challenges which are

¹ Brother Jesús Etayo. Letter convoking the 69th General Chapter. Roma, 2018

² Cf. Pope's Address to General Chapter of Sister Disciples of Divine Master. 22 May 2017

being thrown down to us today. It is not a purely intellectual or spiritualistic experience. It demands *reflection and a serene dialogue without preconceptions*, the generosity to listen to the others, and to avoid sticking being obsessed by our own ideas. It also demands prayer in the light of the Word of God and the other sources of our charism, in order to discover the Gospel-inspired criteria and the pathways which the Holy Spirit is pointing us towards. Finally, it requires decisions to be taken which are the most appropriate for each moment and in terms of everything that has occurred before. It is by no means a simple exercise, and so we have to create the right climate. For this type of discernment is a gift which we have to ask our Lord to grant us, especially over the next few days.

I urge you all, as I have already done to the Brothers, to view these days as a genuine experience of spiritual discernment: Discernment with the courage of the Gospel, which is bold and prudent at the same time, and which prevents us from being paralysed when faced with difficulties, capable of moving mountains, walking on the water, taking up the cross and even accepting death in the cause of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

4. In the days leading up to the Chapter, we evaluated the previous Sexennium and we studied the part of the Chapter Document referring to the life of the Brothers. During these coming days in which you will be taking part in the Chapter, we will deal with the issue of the Order's mission from every aspect, based on the Chapter Document (the "Instrumentum laboris") which you all know already, and have read and studied carefully.

We define our mission in terms of the Hospitality bequeathed to us by Saint John of God our Founder. At the present time, the Order's apostolic work has now increased more than ever before in its almost 500-year history. Let me just mention a few figures. More than 400 health, social/health and social centres and services assisting a wide and varied range of different needy people in every sphere in 53 different countries in 5 continents. Just over 1000 Brothers, 62,000 Co-workers, 25,000 Volunteers and several thousand Benefactors and friends who support our mission in various ways, making up the Hospitaller Family of St John of God today. We have 40,000 beds, about a million admissions to our hospitals every year, and we provide some 22 million consultations and treatments, both at home and in our outpatient centres.

But more important than the numbers, what makes us strong is the charism of Hospitality, which is the very source of our apostolic mission. It is the wellspring from which we have to drink in order to sustain our lives, our Order and our Family. It comes from God, who makes us feel and experience his merciful love to each of us, and sends us out to bear witness to it and to make it visible to others, especially to the sick and those most in need. This was the experience of our Founder, St John of God, and which all of us who have received the charism of Hospitality are called to live and to manifest through our lives.

Hospitality is our treasure, our story. It is a living and still highly topically relevant treasure in the world and in the Church. A story we are called to continue telling through our lives and through our works and our deeds. It is on the basis of this treasure, of this story, that we must shape the Order today and for the future. We have to make it live on, and we have to tell the story in terms of the situation in which we have to live, to continue serving this treasure, offering our world the

alternative of hospitality with all the modern media at our disposal, but always with the same core contents with which St John of God began it.

5. It is true that we have a charism and a mission which are a genuine treasure: Hospitality. But this charism is something we carry with us *in clay jars*³ and we must be fully aware of our limitations and the challenges. On the one hand, the number of Brothers is dwindling, as are the number of new vocations to the Consecrated Life, which raises the paradoxical situation that the Brothers are becoming fewer in number as our centres are increasing, some of which are very large in terms of their complexity. And this is affecting the structures of the Order itself from the point of view of the Brothers, who are becoming increasingly weaker (for example there are Provinces with fewer than 15 or 20 Brothers today), and with fewer possibilities of taking on canon and civil law responsibilities as a result. It is urgently necessary to respond to this disproportionate situation, seeking new structures and new legal personalities.

Other challenges to our mission today are the financial and economic sustainability of our centres, obviously more in some places than in others, as well as the need to heighten our charismatic management in accordance with our principles and values, based on transparency, professionalism and quality. In view of the situation we face today, of course, the main challenge is what we call charismatic sustainability: that is, making sure that we constantly keep the identity of the Order evident to all. In this regard, the Holy See has issued a number of documents, telling us increasingly to focus on the need to take care of all these things. The pastoral care of the sick and social pastoral care in our centres, bioethics, voluntary service and the institutional formation of all the members of our Family, are fundamental aspects which have to be stepped up all the time because they are the expression of our manner and style, and of our identity. These are only a few figures and a few challenges facing us which we have to bear in mind. And of course, there are many more which we shall be seeing and bringing out over the coming days.

6. The last General Chapter give a powerful impetus to the question of the Hospitaller Family of St John of God. I believe that we have grown over these past years. It is obvious that all the apostolic work we are undertaking could not be possible without the help and participation of all the members of this Family. And it is no less certain that we still need to make more progress still, above all in enhancing the charismatic dimension of our family and structuring it. This is in no easy matter, of course, but the Church is asking us to move in this direction which we began quite a long time ago in the Order. Being creative and bold is important here, fostering individual projects with the participation of our Co-workers, and promoting the vocation to Hospitality of the Laity, creating more opportunities to share and for having charismatic formation, inviting our Co-workers to become more fully immersed in the spirituality and the culture of the Order. This is a challenge which we have to address, because there is no doubt that the Hospitality of St John of God in the world today is taking on a new face, and demands new responses.

7. The General Chapter is the most important place to help the Order continue telling and living the story of hospitality wherever it is present anywhere in the world, faithful to the spirit of the charism and the mission. By doing so, hopefully, boldly and humbly, despite all the difficulties and

³ Cfr. 2 Cor 4,7

constraints, we can continue building up the life of our Order and our Family. At this General Chapter we have to lay down criteria and broad guidelines to ensure that the treasure of hospitality which the Holy Spirit has gifted us, will remain alive, so that the story of hospitality in the manner of St John of God will faithfully continue to impassion new generations in our Family and live on in the Church and in society.

8. We have reached the end of the Sexennium. It is been a very intense period, which I have evaluated positively, in which we have tried to place everything we have at the service of the Order with the greatest sense of responsibility. I have personally been able to thoroughly acquaint myself with the Order and it has certainly enabled me to grow as a person and as a Brother of St John of God. There have been far more wonderful and positive moments, but I cannot deny the fact that there have also been more difficult and complicated moments which I have only been able to deal with thanks to Our Lord's help, and that of the Brothers. They have been six years that have flown by, but also six years full of life, experiences, encounters, and of course problems, but above all, years of growth in hospitality. These six years have seen many changes in the world, in the Church, and in the Order.

9. Let me end by thanking in particular all the Co-workers, Volunteers, Benefactors and friends of the Order for the daily commitment to making the Order's project of Hospitality possible and visible. And a special word of thanks is due to all those who have worked directly during this past Sexennium in the Provinces and in the various Commission sin working groups that have been promoted by the General Curia. And once again I thank all of you who are accompanying us over these coming days. I hope that this will be a unique experience of fraternity and hospitality for everyone, Brothers and Co-workers, and I thank you in advance for your contributions which would certainly be of great help to the future of the Order and our St John of God Family.

10. May the Holy Spirit, Our Lady of the Patronage, Saint John of God, and all our Saints and Beati continue to accompany us during the Chapter so that we can continue to give the best of ourselves over the coming days and see our Institute emerging strengthened and renewed for the good of the Church, the Order, and the sick, poor and needy whom we serve.

Thank you very much.

THE SEXENNIUM REPORT TO THE 69th GENERAL CHAPTER

Bro. Jesús Etayo
Superior General
Rome, 15 January 2019

I. INTRODUCTION

Dear Brothers, this report offers you the evaluation and a bird's eye view of the Sexennium that has just ended. It does not set out to be exhaustive, and I shall therefore only be touching on the most significant matters which, in my personal opinion, we have experienced throughout these years. I will be happy to take your questions and comments on this report, and address any other matters which I have not mentioned here and which you wish to raise.

This report will be fleshed out in greater detail by the General Councillors, the Secretary-General, the Procurator-General, as well as the Regional Delegates and the heads of the General Commissions, who will provide more details regarding each one of the areas falling within their remits.

These six years have been very intense and eventful. I believe that we have attained most of the objectives set out in the Declarations of the last General Chapter, even though certain matters are obviously very long-term and can never be fully achieved. Other matters could have been addressed in greater depth, providing more rapid solutions and responses, particularly at this time in which the Consecrated Life and our Order are having to cope with major challenges and changes of great relevance to our future in respect of the life of the Brothers and of our mission. There is still much more to be done in this regard, and the coming years promise to be very important indeed for the future of our Order in every region where it is present.

As I mentioned in my opening address, I give thanks to Our Lord for being ever-close to us and for supporting us, especially in times of greatest difficulties. And I also thank Our Lady of the Patronage, Saint John of God and all our Saints and Beati who have guided me on this mission, and all the Brothers and Co-workers who have accompanied me, helping me to take this mission forward. Without them, nothing could have been done.

II. DECLARATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL CHAPTER: GENERAL EVALUATION

This was a very wide-ranging document, with 34 proposals and other global lines of action.¹ In the reports that will follow, the Brothers will brief you in particular on the areas for which they are responsible, and I will therefore merely mention some of the most important points arising from those Declarations.

¹ Declarations of the 68th General Chapter. Fatima (Portugal) November 2012

- a. **The life of the Brothers and the Communities.** The Document speaks in various places about the need to work on the renewal of the religious and spiritual life of the Brothers and the Communities. This is one of the *long-term issues* I mentioned earlier. Over the years, we have been stressing this issue on every occasion and at all our events: Provincial Chapters, Canonical Visitations, Assemblies of all kinds, circular letters, and on every any other appropriate opportunity. I think - or perhaps it would be better to say, I sense - that we have not made much progress here. *As I have said so many times, this is key to all renewal and to our future.* Perhaps we have not been very good at animating this particular area, but it still remains a priority challenge for us in every part of the Order. Obviously I have seen good and outstanding examples of Brothers and Communities, but it has been difficult to tackle, address and accept certain situations, not only of major weaknesses, but also of a lack of standards for living our consecration and mission. Spiritual life and Continuing Formation in general remain issues still pending which we always talk about, but about which we are really doing little, which is making it difficult to grow and renew ourselves as a result.
- b. **Vocations Promotion and Initial Formation.** This is an area where we have made huge efforts, and I believe that the General Commission on Formation and the Regional Commissions have worked hard in this regard. In particular, I want to recall the fact that we dedicated 2016 as “Hospitaller Vocation Year” under the motto, *Come and See Hospitality*, which ended with a meeting for the Formators and Vocations Promotion officials throughout the Order in January 2016, in Rome. That is certainly not enough in itself, and the dearth of vocations still remains serious, particularly in some regions of the Order. We have to continue working in this direction, and above all it is crucial for everyone, Brothers and Co-workers, to be committed to promoting the Hospitaller vocation of everyone.

With regard to initial formation we have worked well. In every region, regional or interprovincial Formation centres have been established, although some of them still have to begin working, while others need to be consolidated. But I believe that this is a right way forward. In addition to this, we have to improve the selection and formation of Formators to accompany candidates appropriately in the Order’s mission. I believe that in the past three years our apostolic centres in general have grown, particularly in the field of social care, thereby responding to newly arising needs. The same applies to our work in teaching and research. The most typical aspects of our identity have moved forward, such as the Pastoral Care of the Sick and Social Pastoral Care, Bioethics, the School of Hospitality, voluntary service and international cooperation. It is wonderful to see the progress made, the dedication and the good which the Order is doing through its centres throughout the world by constantly updating the charism and mission of Hospitality in the manner of Saint John of God. *Above all, it is an absolute priority for which must always strive.*

There have also been difficulties that have resulted in the loss of certain centres, sometimes because they have been unsustainable, but sometimes because of our own mismanagement. In some places it is becoming increasingly more difficult to keep up our centres because of their complexity, or due to difficult relations with the authorities, financial problems and sometimes because we have difficulties managing them. I believe that this is another great

challenge to be addressed over the coming years, which must be dealt with by the Order in certain places in particular, in order to be able to continue performing our mission while maintaining our identity in accordance with the principles and criteria of charismatic management.

- c. The apostolic mission is an essential element in the life of the Brothers whatever the we happen to be doing at any given moment, and regardless of age or circumstances. Nevertheless, the situation we are living in today has changed, and we cannot always find a place in the mission. Our presence is crucial but it can never again be what it used to be years ago. Our role must be to act as the leaven in the loaf, as prophets of hospitality, bearing witness to Gospel values and, in short, witnessing to our Hospitaller identity as far as possible by spending more time by the side of the sick and the needy, setting a good example to our Co-workers. I believe that this is not always the case, and in many places we are still working on the basis of outdated models, and in others we have not yet started doing what the modern world is asking of us, which is leading in some cases to discouragement and disenchantment. It is a challenge to us to continue working on, and needs time to reflect and to provide formation, so that we can make progress in this particular sphere of our life. Our Co-workers and Volunteers are an essential part of our mission, as we all know. Great progress has been made in this regard, particularly in the matter of delegating responsibilities and providing Formation in the Order's philosophy and ethos in what we call "Schools of Hospitality" in which we are putting into practice a number of highly creative initiatives. These are matters on which we have to continue working, particularly in certain Provinces which are more behind in structuring this type of Formation and in delegating responsibilities. There are some places which continue to insist on giving responsibilities to the Brothers who are not properly trained for them, and in the end this only create major management problems, and in the end, this has a negative impact on the life and vocation of many of them. As an Order, we are a Family in which everyone, Brothers and Co-workers, must find the space which is rightfully ours, and which the Church is asking of us and which the Order is demanding.

Proposal 14 of the Declarations advocated studying the feasibility of setting up an International Formation and Spirituality Centre for Brothers and Co-workers, suggesting Granada, for example. The General Definitory studied the feasibility of this proposal, but in the end it did not take it forward because it was not possible in Granada, at least when the matter was first examined at the beginning of the Sexennium, and also because of the difficulty of finding a group of Brothers who could be freed up to undertake this task.

The General Curia's Finance Commission has worked very well, drafting a tool to give us a clear and reliable picture of the situation in each centre, and their likely risks. Over the coming years this will be an essential tool, which still has to be perfected, and which above all needs to be given full and accurate information input from the Provinces. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life has laid down the guidelines with which we must all comply, to ensure an appropriate professional, transparent, and efficient way of managing our centres, but above all to ensure fidelity to our charism, and to the mission of the Church and the Order.

- d. **The Hospitaller Family of St John of God.** This was the theme of the previous General Chapter and was one of the sections in the Chapter Declarations. Throughout the Sexennium we have continued to promote the Hospitaller Family on every possible occasion. We dedicated one of the Assemblies of Major Superiors to it, and we have found that the theme of the 'Family' has taken on a frontline role in the consecrated life. Pope Francis himself has spoken about it, and the CIVCSVA raised it several times in the document *"Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church."*² I believe that we are growing more aware of the importance of this matter and we will have to continue working on it, clarifying a number of questions and above all making up our minds to promote "The Charismatic Family" not only in terms of the mission and the purpose of the work we are doing, but also of the charism and spirituality of the Order.
- e. **Miscellaneous proposals.** The Declarations of the previous Chapter devoted one section to the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, to which I shall be referring shortly. It concluded with two very concrete proposals. No.33 asked that the next General Chapter should be organised in two stages, one open to Co-workers dealing with the mission, and the second reserved for the Brothers to address issues more specifically dealing with the life of the Brothers. This was duly taken up and this is what we have done for the present General Chapter. No. 34, the final section, referred to the reorganisation of the General Curia. I have to say that the reorganisation has taken place but only internally. We have drafted a manual setting out the functions of each person and a simple reorganisation in order to ensure better coordination with various services and tasks. In reality, only few changes have been made, and they are sufficient, even though this is something that the next General Government can appraise again based on its mission, which is becoming more complex in view of the responsibility it has taken on for its charismatic animation mission and the economic/financial and patrimonial issues that the new General Government will have to address, and which the Holy See requires it to oversee.

III. THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

We have held two Provincial Chapters during this Sexennium, one in 2014 on the theme "Living Hospitality hopefully and boldly" and another in 2018 entitled "The future of Hospitality in the Province". The Provincial Chapter is the most important moment for the participation of the Brothers and in general the whole Hospitaller Family in the Provinces, and it is also the most important occasion for the General Government to animate the life of the Order.

On both occasions we invited the Provinces to reflect on and discern the future of the Order's presence in each one of them, in view of the present situation, as a particular issue which the General Government considered to be a matter of priority, particularly in the second part of the Sexennium. Some Provinces have reacted positively and embarked on this process of discernment

² CIVCSVA, *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church*. Vatican City, 2015, no.38.

about their future, others have seen the need for discernment and are now beginning to act, while others have not yet started, although I nevertheless consider it necessary to be done, as I have said many times before.

We have urged the Chapters to work on the Declarations of the last General Chapter in the Provinces, particularly the part relating to the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God, the apostolic mission, spiritual and fraternal life, and vocations promotion and initial and continuing Formation for the Brothers. In 2018 we particularly emphasised discernment as a crucial element which the Church is urging us undertake, to enable us to take on the challenges we are faced with in each and every Province, to find the responses which the Holy Spirit is asking of us, looking ahead to the future.

In 2014 I was able to preside personally at all the Chapters, and in 2018 several members of the General Definitory also presided. This experience was very positive because it enabled us to see first-hand and share the actual situation in each Province, to reflect, appraise and plan their lives in future, seeing the strengths, the weaknesses and the most important problems facing them. In both cases we encouraged everyone to live hopefully and boldly despite the difficulties, remembering the words of Pope Francis, *“Challenges exist to be overcome! Let us be realists, but without losing our joy, our boldness and our hope-filled commitment. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigour!”*³

IV. THE ANIMATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE ORDER

This is the main mission of the Superior General and the General Council, and the whole General Curia Team. Everything we have done has been precisely for this purpose, consistently with the Declarations of the last General Chapter, and taking account of all the circumstances and matters that have emerged during the past six years. We set out to act in accordance with the criteria laid down by the Church and the Order in terms of *service, listening, dialogue, collegiality and responsibility*, working closely and fraternally: in short, in a hospitaller manner, in the image of our Founder St John of God. This has been our intention, and we shall certainly not always have been able to live up to our intentions, in which case I ask you to forgive any of our shortcomings.

On the whole, everything has been directed towards animating and governing the Order, including the Provincial Chapters, whose importance I would like to stress in particular. I will now mention a few fundamental ‘vehicles’ that we have used to perform this mission:

- a) The General Definitory.** This comprises the Superior General and his Council with the presence of the Secretary-General. We met on average ten times a year, to study, discern and take decisions on all the canonical matters arising, as well as other matters and information requiring a decision to be taken and a response made. In addition to its meetings, in my

³ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Vatican City, 2013, no. 109.

opinion the General Definitory has worked well and has established good communications and relations with all the members.

- b) **The Enlarged General Definitory.** This comprises the General Definitory, the General Delegates of Latin America and the Asia-Pacific, the Regional officials and the General Commissions, which in some cases are also General Councillors: a total of ten Brothers. We held 3- or 4-day meetings each year, providing an opportunity to exchange information, reflect, coordinate and evaluate the whole programme of animation and governance on the life of the whole Order. It is a very relaxed forum in which we are able to reflect on the information exchanged and to steer issues and questions of interest to the whole Order. I would like to express a very positive appraisal of these meetings. One improvement we might make is to appoint one or more Co-workers either on a permanent basis or to deal with specific matters requiring reflection and guidance regarding the life of the Order.

- c) **The Assembly of Major Superiors.** From the outset, and applying the criterion of collegiality, we decided to hold an Assembly of Major Superiors of the Order every year to reflect and share information on the state of the Order, particularly with regard to specific matters of importance to the whole Institution: the Hospitaller Family of St John of God, the Spirituality of the Order, and the CIVCSVA document *“Identity and mission of the Religious Brother in the Church”*. The 2018 Assembly was devoted to providing formation for the Major Superiors (General and Provincial governments and the General Delegate, particularly for the newly-elected Brothers). Several external speakers enabled us to reflect on the issues raised. Each Assembly devoted one full working day by Region, and another day to share information on the life of the Order. I believe that the experience has been very positive and necessary for sharing and directing the life of our Institute with all its officials.

- d) **The General Canonical Visitations.** This is where we make broader contact with the Provinces and where we can share and become more thoroughly acquainted with them. All the Canonical Visitations were held according to the schedule announced in the beginning and they always been performed by a member of the General Definitory accompanied as a rule by the Latin America or the Asia-Pacific Regional Delegate in these Regions. Where I did not personally perform the Canonical Visitation, I attended the final week for the closure, to be present once again in all the Provinces, and to find out more about the situation there.

The theme for this Visitation was *“Living hospitality hopefully and boldly”*, which we have used for most of the events held during the past Sexennium. We did this because we wanted to encourage the Provinces to grow and renew the consecrated life of the Brothers and the apostolic mission, bearing in mind the specific situation in each Province and taking up the challenges and the real-life problems they face. Certainly there were sometimes doubts about how to handle these visitations, and whenever we asked, we never received any alternatives. I personally consider them to have been a positive personal experience, and also because I saw that the Provinces in general experienced them as a special moment for evaluation, planning and animation. Perhaps we should have more closely followed up some of the ideas that

emerged, exploiting this wealth to accompany the Provinces more closely, some of them in particular, and in relation to some very necessary concrete matters.

- e) **Regional meetings.** In previous Sexenniums we decided to work by Regions, and the General Government therefore decided to place particular stress on the animation of our Institute on a regional basis. I believe that this was a wise move, that made the regions more accessible and made it possible to deal with issues in accordance with the culture of each region. Little by little we have set up the necessary structures for regional animation, even though in some cases, consolidation is what is needed. The Regions have worked well in general, focusing on the issues of greatest concern to all of them, of which I would like to highlight *initial formation*, for which several regional formation centres have been opened in the past three years. There are also many other positive issues. We will be briefed on them later by the other speakers responsible for them. I believe this is an avenue we must continue to pursue, while always ensuring close coordination with the General Government, striking a healthy and necessary balance between universality and the cultural and regional diversity that exists within the Order. In 2016 we held the scheduled Regional Meetings which I was able to attend with other members of the Council. It gave us an opportunity to progress and consolidate the work of each region in terms of their concrete situations, and in all cases and at all times for the same charisma and mission of Hospitality. In short, this is a sound avenue to proceed further along and a sound means of animating and governing the Order.
- f) **The General Commissions.** These were in existence previously, but during the past Sexennium we added the Initial and Continuing Formation Commission to join them. We also urged the regions to set up their own Commissions, particularly in the case of certain regions, so that the Regional Commission heads could make up the General Commissions. I believe that this has mainly been done. but it can be improved, and requires closer coordination with the General Curia. Each of the Commission heads will deliver their own reports in greater detail. I would just like to add that I have been positively impressed by all of them: Formation, Social Care and the Pastoral Care of the Sick, Bioethics, Missions and International Cooperation, and the Finance Commission. They have made headway on many issues and have worked well. I am not sure whether their work has sometimes fallen short of the expectations of the Provinces and Houses, but they are a resource for continuing to work and to animate the Order, Regions, Provinces, Communities and Centres in a coordinated manner.
- g) **Circular letters.** These have also been a resource which I have used to animate the life of the Order. I have normally written five such letters each year, for the Day of Consecrated Life, Saint John of God, Easter, Our Lady of the Patronage, and Christmas. I wrote a few more when there was some special event for the Order: the Beatification of the 24 Brother Martyrs of Hospitality in Spain, in 2013, the Centenary of the death of St Benedict Menni jointly with the Superior General of the Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and communications during the Ebola epidemic which affected our centres in Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2014.

At the beginning of the Sexennium I decided that the circular letters had to be short, and written at specific moments in the year, referring to these moments or Feasts of the Order and

with a short reflection containing one or two animation points for the life of our Family. I think that we already have a great deal of written documents from earlier years which are still topically relevant, and so I felt that it would be better not to send out lengthy letters and reflections. Pope Francis and the CIVCSVA have also written important documents to nurture every facet of our consecrated life. In this way I have been able to maintain good communications with the Order by easy-to-read letters which have enabled me to animate the Brothers and anyone else wishing to read them, on issues of importance to our life.

V. THE LITTLE BROTHERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

This was one of the proposals made by the previous General Chapter. The whole process had begun years earlier, but we brought it to fruition with the Decree of approbation issued by the Holy See on 1 November 2014, and with the merger ceremony celebrated in Albuquerque (United States) on 19 January 2015 on the anniversary of the death of Brother Mathias Barrett, the Founder of the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd. The ceremony at which the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd took the vow of Hospitality as Brothers of Saint John of God was also attended by a large group of Brothers from many different Provinces in the Order. The General Definitory approved the erection of the new North American Province of the Good Shepherd for all the communities and centres that had previously belonged to the Congregation of the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, the Communities of the Order in Canada, and the New Jersey Community, which had previously belonged to the West European Province. The General Definitory also appointed the Provincial Superior, the Provincial Councillors, Local Superiors and Formators to serve until the 2018 Provincial Chapters, after which the Province would continue to follow the same path as all the others. It was also at the 2018 Provincial Chapter that the Community at Wolverhampton (England) was transferred, as planned, to the West European Province.

I believe this to have been a success, on which both Institutes had worked previously with a very generous response on the part of each of them, in response to the call of the Holy Spirit and the Church. I also believe that it is working well, and from the outset they have been working with the United States Province in California, holding regular meetings with the two Provincial Definitories, and celebrating the recent Provincial Chapter joint, with some moments shared in common, and other sessions held separately.

VI. A FEW SALIENT EVENTS IN THE SEXENNium

The Sexennium was extremely busy with many events and important moments in the life of the Order and the Provinces. I was able to attend many of them, but for others I was not free, and all of them demonstrated the vitality of the Order, its charism, and its mission. I would just like to mention a small number of them, and I apologise if I omit anything important.

- a) **The Beatification of the 24 Martyrs for the Faith and Hospitality.** This took place on 13 October, 2013 in Tarragona (Spain). It was a highly emotional event, beginning in Tarragona with many other Martyrs of the Spanish Civil War (known in Spain as the '20th Century

Martyrs') and then in Sant Boi (Barcelona) where we were able to celebrate it with the Hospitaller Family. It was attended by Brothers and Co-workers from all over the Order. Subsequently, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints approved the union with the other group of our Martyrs beatified in 1992, so that we could celebrate their liturgical Memorial together on 25 October.

- b) The Centenary of the death of St Benedict Menni.** Many activities were organised, some jointly with the Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The theme of the centenary was *St Benedict Menni: a Heart without Borders*. It opened in Dinan (France) on 24 April 2014 and closed at Ciempozuelos (Spain) on 24 April 2015. We took part in both events, joined by many other Brothers, Sisters and Co-workers from both our Institutions. It provided an opportunity to call to mind the prophetic testimony to hospitality by our saintly Brother who, in a very difficult age, had responded boldly and offered himself totally in response to Our Lord's call, following the example and the spirit of Saint John of God.
- c) The Ebola epidemic.** Even though Ebola, and the fact that it was spreading with a few cases in various West African countries, was already known, it was only in mid-June 2014 that the news became more alarming and had begun to affect our own centres in Liberia and Sierra Leone. We all know what happened in the following months, and the outcome: 18 of our own people died, 4 Brothers (Brother Patrick, Brother Miguel Pajares and Brother George Combey of the Lunsar Community), Sister Chantal Pascaline, a Missionary of the Immaculate Conception in our Monrovia hospital, and 13 Co-workers, men and women, five in Monrovia and eight in Lunsar.

The epidemic was devastating for the countries affected, leaving thousands of people dead and many more in poor health, orphans, broken families, and so on. Poverty soared in these countries which were already very poor. It was a long time before international aid arrived and proved its effectiveness, because of a lack of the necessary care. We had to close the hospitals to prevent contagion, even though it created other difficulties for us. The epidemic could not be reined in until well into the year 2015. I would like to recall the generous response of the whole of our Order to the appeals we made to help the Brothers and the centres, and also the support we received from a number of agencies outside the Order, and from the Church and civil society. To all of them I wish once again to express my thanks for their support, solidarity and assistance, as the expression of the Hospitality of Saint John of God.

I would like to make special mention of the testimony of the Brothers who stayed there, and those who gave their lives to stay present in that horrendous situation, and the Brothers who also opted to stay on there, placing their own lives in peril. We pay homage to all of them. As I said at the time, they were *true prophets and Samaritans of hospitality* for the Order, for the Church, and for the world. They demonstrated the greatness of our vocation to the consecrated life, and lived it until the very end. I thank all of them, the whole Family of Saint John of God which wrote a new "glorious" page in the history of the Order. Their efforts very soon came to fruition as we shall see, and I am sure that they will continue to bear more fruit still.

- d) **The First European Citizen Prize 2014.** This was awarded us the Order, together with other institutions, by the European Parliament acting on a proposal by the Spanish MEP Gabriel Mato who said, “Some of the values that best represent the European Union, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, equality and respect for human rights, among others, are faithfully reflected in the work of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God, based on humanism, solidarity and support for the people in the greatest need. This is why I made this proposal and I am very happy to see that it has been chosen for the First European Citizen Prize 2014”.⁴ On 25 February 2015, we went to the European Parliament for the official award ceremony. Prior to that, an event had been held in Madrid attended by the Superiors of the Spanish Provinces.
- e) **The Princess of Asturias of the Concord Prize 2015.** These are the most important prizes awarded in Spain and are widely publicised nationally and internationally by the media. They are awarded to people and institutions of high international repute. The citation said that it had been decided to “award the Princess of Asturias of the Concord Prize 2015 to the Hospitaller Order of St John of God in recognition of the exemplary care it has provided over five centuries. It is present in over 50 countries and, in times today’s difficult times it deals with such sensitive issues as the Ebola epidemic, the migration crisis and, more generally, it protects the most disadvantaged people, and those threatened with exclusion”.⁵ I believe that this is a beautiful definition of our mission. As I have said before, it not only fills us with humble pride, it also imposes a responsibility and a huge commitment on us because ultimately, “we are doing what we have to do”, which is and must be our merit.

The ceremony at which the King of Spain, Felipe IV, awarded the Prize was held in the city of Oviedo (Asturias) on 23 October, 2015. We had a chance to share those days with the Brothers and Co-workers who accompanied us and with the Brothers of St John of God Family in the Gijón Centre (Asturias). It provided an opportunity to spread the charism and mission of the Order, and at the time everyone was vividly mindful of the experiences and events in the Order during the Ebola epidemic a few months earlier, and the consequences of which the people were still suffering at the time.

- f) **Other events.** There were many other events during the Sexennium which I will just briefly mention: the 2015 Hospitaller Vocation Year which we inaugurated on 20 January with a video message to the whole Order. The 2015 Year of Consecrated Life. The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the canonisation of St Richard Pampuri in 2015. The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in 2016. The Order’s World Bioethics Congress in 2017. The 150th anniversary of the arrival of St Benedict Menni in Spain, and various anniversaries of Provinces and centres, many of which I was able to attend in person. I would also like to mention that I attended all the Assemblies of Major Superiors that are held in Rome twice a year, at which we examined common topical issues of relevance to the consecrated life.

⁴ <http://www.elperiodicodecanarias.es/san-juan-de-dios-obtiene-el-premio-ciudadano-europeo-2014-del-parlamento-europeo/>

⁵ Letter of the President of the Fundación Princesa de Asturias to the Superior General of the OHSJD, enclosing the Jury Decision, dated 2 September 2015. General Curia Archive. Roma.

VII. THE TIBER ISLAND HOSPITAL OF SAINT JOHN CALIBITA

Even though you will be hearing a detailed report on the Tiber Island Hospital shortly, I would like to comment briefly on one or two matters. Although the final document of the last General Chapter did not mention it, we certainly discussed it, and was clear that the General Curia would have to see how to disengage from the hospital by transferring it to another Province. This is the idea we had in mind and my personal preference for the reasons we gave at Chapter, and also because I believe that there is no sense today for a single hospital to depend on the General Curia.

Nevertheless, the situation in the centre has prevented us from doing anything about it at the moment. The financial situation at the beginning of the Sexennium was critical and in order to save it, we had to enter into an arrangement with the creditors through the Rome court in 2014, which it later confirmed in 2016. The arrangement is for 5 years, and in April this year we shall have reached the 3rd year. So long as this arrangement exists, the General Curia cannot detach itself legally from the Centre even though it has pulled out of its management. So far, we have paid everything that we agreed and we hope to continue doing so over the rest of the arrangement period.

It is still difficult to comply with the financial plan we agreed for various reasons, due to permanent government cutbacks and by internal management difficulties. We have changed the General Manager twice, hoping to improve the situation.

I would like to thank the Rome Province for its readiness to help and for having signed an agreement to lend the hospital the €39.1 million which was essential to secure the approval of the arrangement and to be able to pay a considerable portion of the first year due under this arrangement. Without that loan, it would have been impossible. I would like to personally thank Brother Giampietro Luzzato and Brother Pascal for all their efforts and for their total dedication as the Legal Representatives and Operational Vice-Presidents of the Board of Directors -- Brother Giampietro Luzzato in the first part of the Sexennium, and Brother Pascal in the second. This is an issue that has not yet been resolved, and today, as I write this report to you in June 2018, we are still facing challenges and risks that we have to decide how to address and solve them shortly, and again in the future.

VIII. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE HOPEFULLY AND BOLDLY: THE CHALLENGES

I have referred several times to the “future” in this report, as well as in my opening address. I would like to mention one of them again, approaching it above all as one of the main challenges which, in my opinion, the Order is now forced to face, and the reason why we wanted this to be the central theme of this General Chapter. It is no longer merely an invitation, as we have been treating it throughout this Sexennium, but in my opinion it places an essential, and I would say urgent, duty on us to act resolutely and take a decision on the future of the Order, engaging on the necessary processes of discernment. This is why I consider this General Chapter to be of such huge

importance, as I said in my letter of convocation, “*it must not be seen as just another Chapter.. resolutions and guidelines will be issued to guide the Order over the coming years... Above all, we shall need criteria and guidelines to steer the life of our Institute and form the basis on which the new General Government can build in order to implement the Chapter decisions.*”⁶ Talking about the future is another way of talking about *renewal* and change, but in a comprehensive fashion, affecting each and every area of our Institute.

Our apostolic work has expanded, and we are now a great Family, with a charism and mission that is absolutely topically relevant today: Hospitality. But under the conditions currently prevailing in our world, the Church and the Order itself, we are facing major challenges that we have to address. I consider one of them to be fundamental, namely, the renewal of the consecrated life of the Brothers and living our vocation joyfully, enthusiastically, and with conviction, knowing how to re-position our mission and our presence. Our numbers are declining all the time, especially where we have the most activities, which means that we have to re-plan the future of the spiritual, fraternal and apostolic life of the Brothers and the Communities. It is not only a matter of numbers, which the Secretary-General will be talking about shortly, even though this is something to be borne in mind because the number of Brothers is declining year by year, and the average age is rising all the time. I believe that we have to view the Order as a Family, as a great movement of John of God Hospitality in which the Brothers play a much smaller role in terms of numbers, and in which we have to find out our proper place today. We cannot contemplate doing everything by ourselves. We must be creative in order to find new responses, leaving more room for the other members of our Family. Where does the Holy Spirit want the Brothers to be today? With what lifestyle? What is our true mission today? The General Chapter is a God-given opportunity to discern and take appropriate decisions that will enable us to respond in the best possible manner to what the Holy Spirit is asking of us.

The complexity of our centres, management difficulties, sustainability problems and the lack of management training mean that most of us are “overburdened and overwhelmed” by our responsibilities which are preventing us from living our vocation and our fraternal life serenely, with communities made up of only a few Brothers as a rule. Moreover, and considering the areas of responsibility which we are taking upon ourselves, we see increasingly fewer Brothers by the side of the sick and far away from the poor and the needy. I believe this to be a symptom of great weakness which we must address to avoid leaving things too late, because all this frequently creates a sense of weariness, disenchantment and a lack of focus in the consecrated life on the part of the Brothers.

The canonical structures of the Order and the Provinces, Communities and Centres also need to be subjected to a thorough discernment in view of all I have just said. I believe that our structures are very often no longer fit for purpose to meet today’s demands. In many of them we are surviving, but without a Provincial project, and sometimes we are devoting all our efforts to the Centres while closing our eyes to avoid seeing how our religious life is flagging. We cannot go on like this, and we cannot let it happen to each one of us. What will happen when the Brothers cannot take

⁶ Brother Jesús Etayo, Letter convoking the General Chapter ,Rome 2018

on the responsibility of the Centres in a given Province mainly because of a shortage of Brothers? In some cases, this could happen quite soon. This is why it is important to think of new juridical forms to enable our Centres and Provinces to remain viable in the near future. It would be wonderful if this Chapter could lay down clear guidance for the new government to implement. I am convinced that another 6 years without such reforms will create enormous complications for the Order, in some places more than in others.

We have many Centres and great potential, but the time has come to review, revise and renew them, to put in place new wineskins so that this new wine is not wasted and can continue filling our mission with life, so that the Order can continue to respond faithfully to what the Church is asking of us according to the spirit of our Founder. Only with humility, generosity and the readiness to convert and renew our lives, will this be possible. This Chapter provides us with an opportunity which Our Lord is giving us to lay the foundations for this to be done.

Certainly the challenges are formidable, but with humility we must address them with the boldness which comes from the Lord that is capable of moving mountains, walking on the water, overcoming the cross and all the difficulties that may arise, including death, as so many of our Brothers did during the Ebola epidemic. We must do it full of *hope*, because it is the Lord who is accompanying our path forward, it is His project that Saint John of God began, and all we are being asked to do is to wake up, come out of our shell which is preventing us from looking out more broadly, and place our trust in our Lord, as always, to take a stride forward as so many other Brothers have done throughout history. I am convinced that we can manage it, and now is the time to set about it.

IX. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to say a few brief words of thanks to the whole Order and all the member of the Hospitaller Family of St John of God for their constant prayers, trust, and esteem and the hospitality I have been shown at all times and everywhere, which have helped me to serve our beloved Order to the best of my ability.

And a very special word of thanks is due to the General Councillors, Brother Rudolf Knopp, Brother Giampietro Luzzato, Brother Benigno Ramos and Brother Pascal Ahodegnon and the General Delegates of Latin America of the Asia-Pacific, Brother Jairo E. Urueto and Brother Joseph Smith, with whom I have shared the mission of animation and governance, and from whom I have always received the maximum cooperation and support. We have worked together on the basis of dialogue, brotherhood and total loyalty.

Thanks are due in particular to Brother André Sène, the Secretary and Procurator General, Brother Elia Tripaldi, our Postulator General, Brother Moisés Martin, the Director of the Missions and International Cooperation Office, Brother José Maria Bermejo, the Head of the General Commission on Bioethics, Dr Xavier Pomés, the General Delegate of the Centres for the Latin American Region and all the staff at the General Curia. All of them have given me great support

and help, and I have worked very happily well with all of them, sharing the mission of the General Government and the General Curia.

I wish to thank the Superiors of the Communities of La Nocetta, Brother Innocenzo Fornaciari, Tiber Island, Brother Ángel López, the Vatican Pharmacy, Brother Rafael Cenizo in the first few years, and then Brother Binish Mulackal, and all the Brothers of the three Communities for their generosity and the dedication of each of them.

I thank all the Provincials and all the Provinces for their willing readiness and for their close support when sharing different situations in the Provinces or in the Order as a whole, and for their generosity in every way in their relations with the General Curia and the Order in the annual campaigns for different projects, or when other matters needed their cooperation.

Many thanks are also due to all the Brothers and Co-workers who have served on the various Commissions and working groups at the General Curia. Many thanks to all of you, and my apologies if I have omitted to mention anyone else by name.

X. CONCLUSION

I wish to end this report as I began, by thanking our Lord and everyone for having been given this opportunity to serve the Order as your Superior General. It is been a great honour for me and I have put all I am and all I have, soul, mind and heart, into it, to perform this mission in a spirit of service, mindful of the huge responsibility it entails. I must say that I have felt the weight of this responsibility on many occasions. And now, at the end of my term, I feel a sense of peace and serenity with all we have achieved, certainly thanks to the support of the Definitory and so many other people, some of whom I have just mentioned, and others besides.

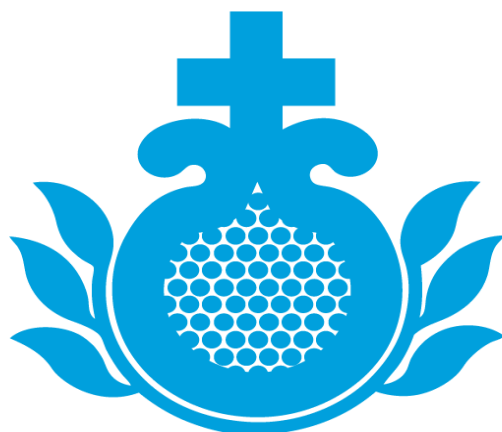
These have been six very intense years for me in every sense of the term, but I feel content. In such difficult times that we have also experienced, I always felt the close presence of Our Lord, Our Lady, Saint John of God, and all of you. I have been able to become thoroughly acquainted with the Order, the Brothers, and with many of our Co-workers and volunteers, and I have been able to see first-hand so many examples of hospitality, fraternity and missionary commitment. But I have also experienced moments of suffering, mainly when having to deal with issues concerning people, and in particular specific Brothers.

I am certainly aware of my own limitations, and I have not managed to reach out to everyone and do everything, and I am sure that I have made many mistakes. I apologise for all this, and particularly ask for forgiveness by anyone, Brothers or Co-workers, who may have been affected by my shortcomings and while asking for forgiveness I can only add that in all things I have endeavoured to do my best.

I cannot end without calling to mind all the Brothers who have returned to our Father's house during the Sexennium. There have been many of them, some of them still in their youth. Today I also call to mind the Co-workers and Volunteers who have died during these years. Looking down

from Heaven with St John of God and our Saints and Beati, I am sure that they will be our best intercessors before Our Lord, praying for the success of this Chapter.

May the Holy Spirit and St John of God accompany us at this General Chapter so that our deliberations and discernment will enable us to continue to be faithful to our charism and our mission in the future, as the Church is asking of us.



ROMA 2019

Capitolo Generale

Costruendo il **futuro** dell'Ospitalità
Shaping the **future** of Hospitality
Construyendo el **futuro** de la Hospitalidad
Die **Zukunft** der Hospitalität gestalten
Construire le **futur** de l'Hospitalité
Kształtując **przyszłość** Szpitalnictwa

69th General Chapter Working Document

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The Preparatory Commission

In January 2016 the General Definitory decided on the motto for the General Chapter and chose **“Shaping the future of Hospitality”**.

During the Regional Conferences, held in the spring of 2016, suggestions and topics were collected as input for the General Chapter.

In June 2016, the following members were appointed to the General Chapter Preparatory Commission:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Bro. Rudolf Knopp | 1 st General Councillor, President |
| Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon | 4 th General Councillor |
| Bro. Massimo Villa | Provincial of Lombardy-Veneto |
| Bro. José Antonio Soria | Provincial of Andalusia. |
| Bro. Dairon Meneses | Colombia |
| Bro. Léopold Gnami | Kenya |
| Bro. Binish Mulackal | India (Vatican Pharmacy Community) |
| Mr Antoine Soubrier | France |
| Mrs Silvia Farina | General Curia, Secretary |

In the spring of 2017, the Order’s five Regions were able to incorporate matters of specific relevance to their own situations into the different chapters of the document. This has provided a rich and complex picture, but also revealed different paces and dimensions of development. The opinions voiced by the Regions do not necessarily reflect the position of the Preparatory Commission and the General Definitory. The proposals from the regions have been subdivided numerically, but this must not be construed as a ranking in order of priority.

The General Definitory adopted the working paper at its meeting on 30 April 2018.

1. The Brothers in the Community



The quality of Community life today would appear to be the most serious problem facing Religious Communities. They seem lost, or they take for granted the motivations that have led people to live together without kinship ties.¹ Community life has often become akin to living in a business enterprise, and the Community is like a place where people meet hurriedly for inconsequential meetings, dictated by mere necessity.

It is also a crisis of relationships... we do not even detect the same kind of concern for people that we show to those outside the Community, to our Co-workers in our centres and to people we do not even know; and we easily become judgmental, and label people, often writing-off problems taking up rigid moralistic attitudes.

We fail to address the underlying issues, not even presuming their existence, and show no interest in them to know about them because this takes time, and turns our benchmarks on their head. It is much quicker just to plaster over the cracks.

We must therefore rediscover a Religious Community of Brothers in the Order who are really fostering dialogue and acknowledge their Brothers for what they are, each one with their own responsibilities and their own talents.²

One thing we certainly need, if we are to reshape the Community of the future, is formation.

We have to provide formation in spirituality and in fraternity more than in professional expertise, focusing attentively on what today's world is demanding of individual Brothers and of the Community as a whole.

Our Religious Provinces are certainly in need of a Formation Team that is fit for purpose.

From the beginning of initial formation we must have instruments at our disposal to help the Brothers develop their vision and experience of a solid and joyful community life, based on fraternity and where ill-feelings between Brothers are eliminated, a Community which is a genuine place of fraternal communion.

... Being with Jesus surrounded by His people, "we sense the challenge of finding and sharing a "mystique" of living together, of mingling and encounter, of embracing and supporting one another, of stepping into this flood tide which, while chaotic which (without Our Lord) can become a genuine experience of fraternity, a caravan of solidarity, a sacred pilgrimage. ... (Pope Francis, February 2017)

¹ "We are called by Jesus to live with him as friends, and thus we encourage one another to fulfil the lord's command to love one another as he loves us and strive to maintain the unity which the Spirit creates in the bond of peace. Hospitality, which we have received as a gift, means that we must live our brotherhood with simplicity: we therefore help one another and forgive each other's weaknesses; we vie with one another in mutual respect, we are grateful to one another; and we identify ourselves with our brothers in their needs, afflictions and joys." (Const. n. 36)

² The document *"Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church"* reminds us that the quality of the fraternity of Religious Brothers is *"an encouragement for the whole Church, because it makes present the Gospel value of fraternal relationships of equality in the face of the temptation to dominate, to search for the best place or to exercise authority as power"*.

The Community is made up of an appropriate number of Brothers, reaching out with a prophetic vision to build up a true open Provincial Community without borders or barriers.

The problem of the Communities is a priority issue today: we have almost reached the point of "every man for himself".

Young people today are looking for alternative places of peace, dialogue, brotherhood... places where they experience and sense love, freedom, a sense of belonging, readiness to forgive... places which are indwelt by a Presence, the presence of Christ, who always promotes and brings life.

"I expect that each form of consecrated life will question what it is that God and people today are asking of them."... (Papa Francesco 28 novembre 2014)

This is why providing formation for the Brothers, preparing them for the future by analysing the present state of the Order in order to project it into the future, has become a priority objective.

We have to reinvigorate our testimony by living faithfully the vows we have professed, preparing the Brothers for the mission and strengthening the witness they give.

We have to offer the Brothers a 360° formation, that takes account of the signs of the times, covering psychology, sexuality, etc, analysing the present state of the Order and projecting it into the future, in order to be better equipped to confront the complex reality of the modern world.

Continuing formation must be put forward to the Brothers as a means of helping them to foster their personal development.

1. What should we reconsider with regard to the composition of our Communities in order to overcome the present crisis in relationships?
2. What instruments are needed to foster and encourage dialogue in the Community?
3. What formation pathways are necessary to equip Brothers to better address the contemporary world and have a vision of the future?



To combat the current crisis in relations, we propose:

1. Internationalising our communities and enticing them to good leaders.
2. Cultivating fraternal life, communications and the sense of community belonging.
3. Organising continuing formation sessions at Community and Provincial levels.



1. Ensure that communities have a sufficient number of Brothers to be able to experience authentic brotherhood. A community with a minimum number of Brothers places individual vocations in peril. An adequate number of Brothers in a community fosters a more powerful community experience and takes account of the fact that community life is one of the pillars on which our life has Hospitaller Brothers rests (Cost. 27a).
2. Establish a school to provide Formator Formation, standardising formation criteria at all levels of formation (vocational discernment, Postulancy, Novitiate and Scholasticate). The contents of formation should be designed to develop skills in the fields of human relations, fraternal life, the psychology of human development and accompaniment, in order to provide the Formators with the instruments they need to accompany new Hospitaller vocations.
3. Offer Brothers the opportunity to have mission experiences in other centres outside their home Provinces or Delegations, in order to acquire a clear vision of the state of the region and of the Order in general.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order at ALL levels of governance adopts and practices collegial, non-hierarchical expressions of leadership.
2. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order needs to explore more radically relevant, non-institutionalized expression of what it means to be and to live intentionally 'in communio': sisters and brothers, lay and consecrated.



1. Focus on the constituent and structural aspects that will foster community life
 - 1.1 Community prayer: shared by all the members of the community
 - 1.2 Fraternity:
 - Promote sharing and participating in joint activities at the Provincial level.
 - Foster the growth of the Brothers through formation with regard to respect for pluralism, dialogue, open and sincere communications and interpersonal relations ...
 - 1.3 Community structure:
 - A minimum number of members (3-4) and compatibility between them; guarantee the time for being physically present in the community, on a daily or weekly or continuous basis... (reduce the number of communities if necessary).
 - Foster "Provincial thinking" as a means of creating communion and implementing Saint John of God's project.
2. Formation:
 - 2.1 Provide formation to the Superior to be an animator, reconcile, leader...
 - 2.2 Promote analysis and discernment, as well as knowledge, as men consecrated to Hospitality.

- 2.3 Stimulate new vocational vitality in the Province by creating a vocational outreach community.
- 2.4 Adjust the initial formation facilities in terms of numbers, ages, nationalities, formation stage ...
- 2.5 Amalgamate the Brothers' initial formation centres: interprovincial, regional, inter-Congregational...
- 2.6 Revise and update the Order's Formation Book.



1. Steps to resolve barriers of relationships and communication.
 - 1.1. Identify and admit to a problem or dysfunctional behaviour when it exists.
 - 1.2. Seek help from a life-coach or socio-psychologist to assist with group dynamics.
 - 1.3. Follow up with a plan of healing to reconcile differences.
2. Brothers are encouraged to seek out the educational, psychological, or spiritual resources and are encouraged to seek age and well-being pathways for nourishing their spiritual life. For example attend joint celebrations and retreats with other Communities, etc.

2. The Brothers as part of the Saint John of God Family



Our Order, and indeed Consecrated Life in general, is experiencing a period of dwindling vocations. Moreover, the changes taking place in our societies, with all their consequences, and which are weighing heavily on the management of our facilities, are forcing us to prepare ourselves appropriately to confront these changes, to ensure a sustainable future for the mission.

Until comparatively recently our Centres were mostly being run by Brothers, but in the present situation *“we are aware of our limitations and thus seek and accept the assistance of other people, whether trained or untrained, voluntary or paid, and strive to communicate to them our spirit in the performance of our mission”* (Constitutions no. 46). All together, we make up the **St John of God Family** which is today being asked, more than ever before, to work more closely on the mission in order to confront the future together.

The vocation of the Brother is not only to be the recipient of God's love, but also to be a witness and a mediator of that same gift and of the project of communion which God has for humanity and which is based on the communion of the Trinity.³

The Brothers' acknowledgment of the task given to each one of us for the good of all is the best way of being able to work together on the mission, and of taking on board the changes which the future is imposing on us. For God in Jesus Christ calls everyone, each with their own unique name. Everyone plays an active part and each has a decisive influence on the others. As members of the Church we have each been entrusted with a “unique and irrepeatable” task to perform for the good of all.⁴

Formation given jointly with our Co-workers is therefore crucially important: since the Brothers will no longer be required to manage the Centres themselves, their role will mainly be to animate and encourage our Co-workers.

Starting in the Initial Formation phase (Novitiate, Scholasticate) we must prepare the Brothers to cooperate with our Co-workers to be able to confront the future and address the changes which the future is imposing on us, and all for the good of the mission. In Continuing Formation we must also provide opportunities for the joint formation of Brothers and Co-workers, so that, through attentive and continuous dialogue, the Brothers can hand on the charism, the legacy of our Founder, and the values of Order for the necessary in-depth consideration. Accordingly, Brothers and Co-workers are being called to work together to plan and project the future of the charism.

Our Apostolic Centres cooperate for the mission not only with the laity but also with other Congregations. Our Communities therefore already have experience with welcoming others, but this must be further strengthened, reaching out to try new types of community life, also on an inter-Congregational basis, recognising that we are all the people of God on the same mission. Organising spiritual formation events open to the outside, for example with our Co-workers or others, can also be helpful in this respect.

³ THE CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE: *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church* “And you are all brothers”, no. 13.

⁴ *Christifideles Laici* nos. 10, 28.

“Relationships in the Church-Communion are established from what unites rather than what divides. Today we are becoming conscious once again of our common heritage. It is a great treasure that makes us all fundamentally equal, in common dignity and in common rights and duties.”⁵

1. What ideas or proposals do you have to provide appropriate joint formation for the Brothers and Co-workers?
2. What do you propose as a means of sharing our evangelising mission with our Co-workers?
3. How can we collaborate with other Congregations?



In view of the different religious beliefs of our Co-workers, joint formation must arouse the interest of everyone in the beneficiaries of our mission. The following suggestions have been made to this end:

1. The Brothers and Co-workers should jointly organise formation sessions on the Church’s social teaching, the Order’s values and ethos, the Order’s Charter of Hospitality, bioethics, the pastoral care of the sick, etc.
2. Institute a World Day for Co-workers.
3. Create a platform to share information and projects with the other Congregations and, where necessary, take part in joint formation programmes.

⁵ THE CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE: *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church* “And you are all brothers”, no. 8



1. Enhance the Schools of Hospitality as an effective means of disseminating familiarity with the charism on the part of our Co-workers, and as a means of helping the Brothers with their continuing formation, and thereby foster fraternal life and working with our Co-workers.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order wishes to foster formative opportunities focusing on contemporary models of religious leadership at all governance levels across all regions and provinces.



1. Opening the Communities to our Co-workers:
 - 1.1 Promoting socialising opportunities within and outside the community (the Commissioner, retreats, outings together, etc.).
 - 1.2 Encourage our Co-workers to take part in community prayer and the Brothers' continuing formation sessions.
2. Create a movement to share the spirituality of Saint John of God by the Brothers and Co-workers.



1. The North American experience is heavily regulated by the State which generates volumes of standards and norms requiring continuing education, mission integration and training of Brothers, co-workers and volunteers.
2. Build upon already established formal and informal ways of training, celebrating and recognising co-workers and volunteers that express the values of Hospitality in their duties and responsibilities.
3. Evangelisation is best carried out in an environment where there is strict separation of Church and State. By being attentive to the needs of those we serve, we can further explore and identify areas of collaboration with like-minded Catholic Christian organisations.

3. The St John of God Family



Shaping the future of hospitality entails having to reflect on the real-life situation in which we are living today. Every aspect of society – cultural, technological and people’s mindsets – are rapidly changing with regard to the environment and even the way we live our spirituality. All these changes have thrown down the gauntlet to the Order: to change the way we perform our mission, bearing in mind that we have an increasing number of centres, and also increasing numbers of Co-workers committed to our mission.

The 2009 General Statutes offer the vision of the Order as “The Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God”.⁶ This imposes a responsibility on the Brothers to share the charism of Hospitality with our Co-workers. And this task requires the Brothers to reach out to understand that the Co-workers have also received the gift of Hospitality, and that the present reality requires us to work as a team and undergo formation in our identity as members of this Family.

One of the great problems facing contemporary society is the fragmentation of the family, which no longer offers an appropriate environment in which the members can develop. In the Saint John of God Family we must live in an environment that enables Brothers and Co-workers alike to play the most appropriate role for performing the mission in the centre. The appropriate environment is created when the Brothers commit to living and sharing the gift they have received from God: **Hospitality** – good Co-workers must be selected who are **professionally** qualified and able to be **bearers of values** and share with the Brothers our **identity with the Charism of Hospitality**; it is not enough to be technically expert and to be sensitive to values unless people clearly bear in mind what unites us as a Family on a mission: our identity with the Charism received from Saint John of God which he knew how to hand on to his followers.

Shaping the future of Hospitality means, above all else, that the Brothers must fully live up to the charism and make it shine out brightly, transmitting it to our Co-workers, together with the legacy of our Founder and the values and ethos of the Order.⁷ At a later stage we have to engage in attentive and continuing dialogue to enable the Co-workers, particularly those holding senior managerial posts of responsibility, to be fully acquainted with the charism and to develop an authentic Hospitaller

⁶ (from the Glossary to the General Statutes):

ST JOHN OF GOD HOSPITALLER FAMILY

Between the Order, a religious institute legally recognised by the Church, and its Co - workers a very close and deep communion has been established over time. This has been specifically documented in chapter two of the General Statutes. The persons and groups who are inspired by the ideals of St John of God make up the St John of God Family. (GS 20 – 22)

CO-WORKERS

The term “Co-workers” implies a fundamental attitude in the Order, in line with which the people who collaborate with the Order are not considered as mere employees, but as participating equally with the Brothers. As such they are equally responsible for carrying out the Order’s mission. The degree of co - responsibility varies according to the position held at the Centre. The term “Co - workers” is, moreover, used in a very broad sense. It covers not only the persons and professionals who work in the Order’s Centres, but also Volunteers and Benefactors. (GS 21)

⁷ Constitutions, art. 23: “...we are so imbued with our mission that those who work with us feel inspired to behave in the same way”.

identity. Our aim must be to view, and reveal, ourselves as a Family, sharing one common aim: to evangelise **the world of pain**.

1. What can be done to enable the Order to be truly able to recognise that the Gift of Hospitality is a gift of God, not only for the Brothers but also for our Co-workers, Volunteers and Benefactors?
2. The General Statutes (articles 20 - 22) offer a vision of the Order as the Saint John of God Family: how are we experiencing this family kinship in our mission, and what do we lack that will enable us to feel that we are a true Hospitaller Family sharing solid bonds, and not a broken family of the kind we see today in our societies?
3. The responsibility to keep a family united depends on the efforts and the commitment of each of its members. How must our Brothers and Co-workers (employees, volunteers and benefactors) act to shape the future of the Saint John of God Family and the future of Hospitality?



To enable the Hospitaller Family of St John of God to live in harmony with the Charism of Hospitality and to attain its primary purpose of evangelising the world of suffering, we propose to:

1. Identify individual Co-workers, volunteers and benefactors will share our Charism for children membership of our Hospitaller Family.
2. Be mindful of the invaluable and enormous contribution made by our Co-workers to develop our mission, and to valorise it.
3. To openly display our identity and share our common purposes by cultivating the spiritual solidarity between Brothers and Co-workers, communities in the same Province and above all between Provinces.



1. In order to make Co-workers, volunteers and benefactors feel that they are members of our institution and personally identify with it, they need to undergo a process of formation in the charism and values of Hospitality. As far as possible we should create an entity with its own statutes able to perform this mission with its own structure, organisation, plans and joint work projects and with an assessment mechanism.
2. Communities must be willing to agree to accept laypeople to experience life in our communities and thereby contribute their own skills to our mission, even though this may mean having to amend our General Statutes to account for the fact that our communities can incorporate lay people wish to devote a period of their life to evangelisation.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order adopts and practices a process model of initial and ongoing formation that is individualized, experiential, and relational for both the brothers and co-workers.



1. Implement active policies to help Co-workers, to transmit and put into practice the philosophy, values and ethos of the Order:

- 1.1 Create an “Identity and Mission” department or service in every centre/hospital in order to individuals, live and preserve the values of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God (hospitality, respect, responsibility, quality and spirituality) focusing around the people in our care, and their needs.
2. Upgrade and promote the “Schools of Hospitality” in the Provinces with a structured, official programme and/or also promote places of joint formation and dialogue on the life of the centres: projects, programmes...
3. Pay particular care with the selection of personnel, particularly for senior and middle management posts in the Apostolic Centres.



1. The notion of co-workers and volunteers transcends the legal framework and norms of The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Canadian Human Rights legislation. The mission of Hospitality is best served by a team of like-minded individuals. This gives us the freedom to speak of a workplace environment as a *Community of Hospitality and Service*, integrating co-workers and volunteers who want to participate in the charism of the Order into ways of belonging, mindful of the need to regularly evaluate the language we use in a highly litigious culture.⁸
2. Hospitality as a moral stance, recognizes the dignity of the human person at moments in their lives when they are the most vulnerable due to sickness, aging, abandonment and homelessness. Helping them restore their sense of self-worth and well-being will always attract like-minded followers, building an environment of Hospitality and belonging.

⁸ This is nicely expressed by Laurie Morrow PhD: “*Make no mistake: consciously or unconsciously used, referring to employees as “family” is, indeed, a tactic, a kind of manipulation. It’s a clumsy, transparent ruse to extract a sense of loyalty and obligation from subordinates. By consciously employing this metaphor, an employer/manager reveals how little he respects those he is to lead. And those who work for such manipulators are usually aware they’re not receiving fatherly protection or, God knows, wisdom, but enduring one of the techniques a higher-up uses to himself feel more important.*”

4. Bearing witness to Hospitality



Chapter 5 of this document deals with the need to create solid and efficient structures for the future. But this is not to be seen as an end in itself, merely to optimise our organisational profile. Our aim is to guarantee that our care centres never lose their Christian inspiration.⁹ That can and must be done above all through the relevant formal procedures (regulations, labour contracts...) but that is not enough. More important still is to ensure that the Saint John of God Family lives and bears witness to Christian values.

To make Christian values and the values of Hospitality tangible, we need a spiritual basis, for we must not forget that evangelisation¹⁰ is an essential element of our mission. This makes it necessary for the Order to identify new pathways and not to stop at purely imaginary responses and good intentions.

Shaping the future of Hospitality requires us not only to live and bear witness to Christian values at a personal level, even though this is crucially important, but above all to guarantee this witness at the institutional level. Otherwise, whether or not a member of the Saint John of God Family is committed to Christian values and to the Order's values would be purely coincidental. The managers in our Centres must therefore always draw inspiration for their strategic decisions and policies on transparent health care and management ethics. In Centres in which no Brother is present, people must sense and feel the authentic spirit of the Order's charism. To achieve this, Co-workers have to be carefully selected and formed, and the managerial Co-workers in particular must be accompanied, grounded in the values of the Order.

The key factor that makes our witness to Christian values so important is not so much the survival of our institutions, but above all the welfare of the people we care for. It is our duty to defend and to safeguard their rights.¹¹ In today's plural societies this can lead us into conflicts of values, with the personal interests and/or values of the guests at loggerheads with Christian values. Shaping the

⁹ **Constitutions, no. 45**

... Our fidelity to the Church, to those who suffer and to the spirit of the Order means that we must examine our works and place them under review whenever necessary, so that they always correspond to our charism and mission. We pay constant attention to the signs of the times, always interpreting them in the light of the Gospel ...

General Statutes, no. 19

The Church, by virtue of this command of the Lord, feels the duty of being present in the world of the sick and needy. Indeed, new forms of poverty and of marginalisation, and the constant evolution of medicine and the social sciences, make necessary new ways of care that we want to transform into means of evangelisation according to the spirit of Hospitality.

General Statutes, no. 49

Our Apostolic Works are, and define themselves as, Catholic. This characteristic commits us in a special way, both within the Church and society, to observe and defend gospel principles, the social doctrine of the Church and the norms relative to human rights....

¹⁰ **Constitutions, no. 47**

... either as individuals or as a community, we become part of centres, structures or institutions belonging to the Church or State in order to perform a mission of evangelisation and service in the field of health-care...

¹¹ **Constitutions, no. 23**

The hospitality we have professed means that we must defend and keep watch over the rights of the individual to be born, to live in a decent manner, to be helped in sickness, and to die with dignity...

future of Hospitality in such a complex and tangled situation¹² is a huge challenge which demands boldness to put real changes and concrete actions into practice. Purely imaginary declarations will never take us into the future.

1. What decisions must we take today?
2. What emphasis is needed at the institutional level to make the values of Hospitality truly incisive?
3. We cannot merely go on talking about bioethics: we must endow ourselves with an institutional ethos. How do we intend to proceed in this direction?



In order to ensure that the Saint John of God Family will practise and bear witness to Christian values, we are committed to the following:

1. To take decisions at all times that insist on the Order's values (hospitality, outreach, respect, spirituality, responsibility).
2. To create and make a School of Hospitality a formal requirement in every centre in the Order (centre-school-community of Brothers).
3. To market our values using the new information and communications technologies.
4. Scrutinise the institutions to ensure respect for the dignity of people.

¹² "We live in a society in which economic rules substitute moral ones". Address by the Holy Father Pope Francis to the participants in the Plenary of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, 28 January 2017



1. Less complex, better organised and accessible structures, to reach out to the sick and needy who are unable to get treatment and medical services. Through our witness, we must all inspire attitudes of hospitality and our charismatic spirit. Our mission must be to provide humanised management, standing by people, to foster, motivate and animate a way of working focusing around four aspects: planning, communication, teamwork and ongoing formation.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order discerns contemporary expressions of New Hospitality - "new peripheries" and the "new poor" confronting humankind (for example, refugees, victims of abuse, and the suffering planet).
2. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order auspices processes of formation for brothers, co-workers, and volunteers, and best practice, protocol and policy development across all provinces that ensures the creation of safe places and safe spaces for all those engage in our mission centres.



1. Enhancing the "social face" of the: taking care to respond to the new poverties and needs present around us.
2. Keeping communities in the centres only if they are able to bear witness.

3. Actively transmitting our Hospitaller principles and values to our Co-workers, taking particular care to accompany the managers of the centres as they perform their role as future transmitters of the Order's identity features.
4. Regularly evaluating charismatic management in the centres and in the Province
5. Making our Catholic identity visible in all our Apostolic Centres, and cooperating with other Church organisations or congregations who share the Charism of hospitality.



1. The Order needs to re-evaluate and update the paradigm developed by Bro. Pierluigi Marchesi giving it new life and insights that are relevant for today.
2. A Brother of St. John of God is a strong faith-shaped moral guide who must do what is right regardless of the consequences. The moral guide is motivated by his confidence in God's Providence.
3. A Brother of St. John of God is a hope-inspired prophetic presence. God's love, forgiveness and welcome is the key to a Brother's sense of self and is shared with whom he meets and serves.
4. Hospitality goes beyond the current culture of rights and is driven by a critical conscience. We embrace a hospitality that is inclusive and promotes equality within a framework of justice and fairness, providing a safe and meaningful environment to heal. This gives our brothers, co-workers, volunteers and benefactors, within ministry, a purpose that restores and energises life.
5. That each Province/Region of the Order establish an Ethical Forum with clear standards giving guidance in the areas of social, clinical, environmental, employment and individual code of ethics and boundaries in ministry.

5. Structures for the future



For many years now the Order's Centres have been structured according to the legislative, legal, financial and economic instruments that exist in every individual country in order to ensure their continuity in the manner of Saint John of God. Little by little, networks have been established in various fields so that the spirit of the Saint John of God Family has become even more deeply embedded. This is a process we must encourage in the Provinces where this is not being done.

But how can we begin to push ourselves still further? We must not sit back and be content with keeping our Centres and facilities standing, but we have to reflect on how we wish to act in order to make them ever more faithful to the charism, in a discernment process that will enable us to find new responses and new efficient, responsible and generous ways of working together. Our aim must not merely be to maintain the Centre's high productivity levels by sound management but, as Pope Francis has reminded us, we must ensure that our Centres are consistent with our charism and *"continue to be effective instruments to give God's tenderness to many"*.¹³

The Order's General Statutes invite us to create useful legal structures for the mission.¹⁴ The debate on our Centres' legal structures has been stalled for many years. Some Provinces have adopted solutions that have weakened the Order's power of influence (the General Curia) or have even brought about the loss of ownership. If we wish to address our future responsibly, we have to ask three questions regarding the management and legal liability of our Centres:

- Do we want to assign our Centres to other entities?¹⁵
- Do we want to keep our Centres at all costs as Church property?¹⁶
- Do we intend to keep our Centres, albeit with different legal structures, under the leadership of the Order?¹⁷

Whatever we choose, must be aware that there is no single perfect solution to fit all. Every approach has its advantages and its drawbacks. The greatest error of all would be, however, to do nothing and leave all these things as they are, because the legal liability of the Brothers would pose an incalculable risk for the future.

If we want to boldly face the future, we must also ask ourselves what legal structure is necessary for the General Curia, to enable each to competently coordinate and monitor all the various juridical entities which are gradually being put in place.

¹³ Message of Pope Francis to the participants in the Second International Bursars' Symposium, organised by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 25.11.2016.

¹⁴ The Provinces and equivalent entities can, if they deem it appropriate, and subject to the judgement of the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council, after receiving the opinion of the General Definitory, may decide to adopt the most appropriate secular law personality according to the situation in the country in which they are established.

In every instance, respect for and the promotion of the principles and values of the Order must be guaranteed. It is appropriate to maintain a linkage with the Public Juridic Personality of the General Curia.

¹⁵ This is what many Congregations of Sisters have opted to do.

¹⁶ In this case, a PJP might be preferred. Our Centres would continue to be Church centres but belonging to the Congregation for Religious Institutes, and they would no longer be Centres of the Order.

¹⁷ In this case one could, for example, incorporate a limited liability company (Ltd) which nevertheless presents certain disadvantages. Or we could create foundations, but they are generally under State control.

Independently of these legal and structural issues in the centres, in future we shall have to do a great deal more networking. At the local level we therefore intend to encourage the centres to reflect modernising our charism of Hospitality, cooperating with other agencies (religious and social) which are experts in their particular fields and thereby give the Order the possibility to be acknowledged for its experience and competence. Every centre must take care to respond to the new poverties and be encouraged to create new small-scale structures which can respond to specific challenges. These structures can be managed jointly with the centre and the local community, by promoting participation by Co-workers and Brothers in an innovative project. We should thereby ask our lay Co-workers to take part, on a voluntary basis, in this type of project either at the local level or through international voluntary service, to bear witness to our charism jointly with the Brothers to be drivers of solidarity, brotherhood and communion at the service of people in need.

Rethinking our centres is to spell out *“the meaning and the social and ecclesial implications of economic decisions taken by Institutes of Consecrated Life. Discernment that begins by appraising the financial possibilities accruing to financial and personal resources, with the help of specialists to use instruments which make it possible to manage prudently and control the management without improvisation, operates in compliance with the law and placed at the service of an integral ecology. A discernment that, above all, goes against the tide, because we place money at our service rather than serving money for whatever reason, even for the most just and sacred ends.”*¹⁸

1. How do we wish to integrate our structures in the process of shaping the future of the Order?
2. How do we propose to refocus on the essentials of our vocation, shedding “the burden” of management but without creating the impression that we are abandoning ship?
3. How can we give global visibility to the Order, and no longer local visibility alone?



In order to harmoniously integrated our structures as we shape the future of Hospitality, we have to:

1. Embark on a phase in which we must discern which are the most appropriate structures for our present situation (religious communities, Apostolic Centres) taking account of the health care policies in the countries in which we are present.

¹⁸ Message of Pope Francis to the participants in the Second International Bursars’ Symposium, organised by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 25.11.2016..



1. Promoting the presence in our centres of Brothers with skills and abilities in particular areas of service and work so that we have an active presence of hospitality there, and so that our Co-workers feel accompanied on the mission.
2. standardising care criteria and models at the regional level in order to strengthen in the image of the Order in the world, with interprovincial or regional teamwork by developing different areas of work both at the level of the life of the Brothers, and of the management of our centres.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order undertakes a radical restructuring of the current province structures, ensuring that all stakeholders: brothers, co-workers, clients, and supporters - are engaged in a process of respectful, collegial discernment.



1. Creating new legal or Canon law structures to enable us to continue practising the charism of Hospitality in the manner of Saint John of God in the Provinces' existing centres, independently of Provincial mergers and amalgamations. Doing everything possible to ensure that the new legal entities are under the authority of the Order.

2. Encouraging mergers and amalgamations of Provinces.
3. Enhancing or creating structures or platforms (networking) to make the Order known globally.
4. Drafting criteria and creating forms of institutional presence in centres without a Community Brothers.



1. Hospitality mandates that we operate our mission-driven ministry utilizing sound business acumen. Today's market driven economy has created a complex and heavily regulated business model for the management of ministries. Since we are called to offer a hospitality that responds to the needs of God's people, it is our responsibility to create a coherent plan to initiate a process that explores these new opportunities and challenges.
2. Our Charism of Hospitality compels us to safeguard the dignity of human life so that we continue to hear the cry of those who suffer. To keep our heritage alive both globally and locally we must continue to be a voice of justice for the needs of the poor and those who suffer. Changing needs, social structures and institutions demand a new, bold response. A trust in Divine Providence helps us to let go and let God show us the way to meet these challenges and responds to the needs of God's people. This requires us to go outside our present comfort zone into where people are and address the unmet needs.
3. As the need for partnership becomes a reality, we need to identify the preferable direction that is most workable. For example, mergers, joint ventures, affiliations, leases, acquisitions, management service agreements, change of corporate owners, or sale of assets.

6. International Cooperation



In his book, *“The next Global Stage, Challenges and Opportunities in our Borderless World, Wharton School Publishing (2004)”* the Japanese Professor, Kenichi Ohmae, one of the world’s leading management consultants, uses a simile for cooperation which could also apply to our own Hospitaller Family, likening the world to a theatrical performance. He uses the example of a group of dancers visiting China from many different distant lands, such as Australia, America and Africa, to perform a traditional Irish dancing show (**Riverdance**) in the city of Dalian. The Chinese public loved the show and no-one had expected it to be so successful, or that

the Chinese would have taken so eagerly to it.

Similarly, Kenichi Ohmae maintains that organisations and institutions (such as the Hospitaller Family) range beyond localism and must market their products globally. Every organisation must be receptive to new ideas and to new knowledge. They must be aware of, and sensitive to, the many and diverse realities that exist in every place.

From an etymological point of view, cooperation is a form of social organisation which enables people sharing common interests to work together, in the pursuit of a common general goal. It demands a certain level of mutual trust and understanding.

For our Hospitaller Family, the call to cooperate:¹⁹

- Is an invitation to travel far, walking together. There is an African proverb that goes like this: “if you want to travel fast, go alone, but if you want to travel far, go with others”, which means that people evolve when they are supported and when they are challenged by cooperating with other members of the same group;
- Is an invitation to adapt, to change the way we think of hospitality with a global, and not a local or ‘provincialised’ perspective (“Hospitality without borders”) and to commit ourselves fully to the social evolution of the human being, which is simulated by innovation;
- is an invitation to “put away your former way of life, stripped of the old man... and clothe yourselves with the new self” (cf. Eph 4, 22.24).
- For collaboration/cooperation stimulates creativity -- openness and outreach as a means of cultural apprenticeship²⁰ in which people are encouraged to challenge themselves, and innovation is rewarded by implementing emerging projects;
- This entails a change of paradigm which underpins and illustrates the fact that enterprises must profit from technological progress in order to position themselves in this world as entities that are capable of going beyond borders.

¹⁹ General Statutes art.51 a)The universal character of the Church motivates us to do everything possible to improve the life of the sick and needy in every part of the world. Because of this, without forgetting the places where the Order has been present for many years, we are open to new challenges and with missionary spirit and dedication, we transmit the charism of Hospitality, in harmony with the local Churches, respecting the local culture and traditions.

²⁰ General Statutes art.51 b) : Those who commit themselves directly or indirectly to the missionary work of the Order must ensure that they have an appropriate personal and communitarian formation in the human, spiritual, technological and social dimensions and they must be supported and encouraged by their Superiors.

This type of cooperation, being based on solidarity and intended to be evolving and integrated, can thereby address increasing inequalities and effectively strengthen more fragile systems, respecting human rights. This manner of working will certainly lead us to travel along the path of Hospitality without borders.

Today, the Hospitaller Family has spread throughout the five continents even though a segment of the population is excluded -- the so-called Third and Fourth Worlds. The Fourth World is populated by millions of poor homeless and often illiterate people in search of work, and who often fall into the clutches of the criminal economy. Even in the the affluent and powerful world there is a considerable proportion of the population who are excluded from the global networks, and are considered to be economically useless.

Mindful of the benefits of appropriate cooperation, the interdisciplinary groups which wish to do everything possible to improve the quality of genuine inter-professional collaboration will agree to invest the necessary time and necessary energy to overcome the difficulties and change the way they work together.

The quality of user-services, the development of a structure or a nation, must necessarily undergo this change of mentality.

1. In order to live the new Hospitality we have to rethink our presence in the world of health care which is constantly evolving, and whose staggering pace of change could well destroy us, if we fail to clearly spell out our projects and our strategies. How can intra-Congregational cooperation (i.e. cooperation within the Order) help us to keep the Hospitality of Saint John of God alive?
2. Renewing Hospitality means having to offer quality services, correctly calculating our financial resources, considering the demands of social justice, paying attention to the formation of Brothers and Co-workers alike, and adapting our administrative structures.²¹ What place can international cooperation occupy in this process?
3. With what criteria can cooperation between our Order and other Institutes working in the health care and hospitality field serve our structures to ensure that we remain an instrument of evangelisation in the Church and in the world.

²¹ Charter of Hospitality, 4.4. Effectiveness, efficiency and sound management.

General Statutes art. 162. With regard to the administration of the goods of the Apostolic Work, the following regulations shall be taken into account:

- a) they shall have their own administrative regulations based on the spirit of charismatic management, approved by the Provincial Definitory, after ensuring that they comply with civil laws and have been communicated to the General Curia;
- b) not all the Brothers of the Community without distinction should participate in the administrative matters of the Apostolic Work, but only those who are involved, in accordance with the aforementioned regulations..

Charismatic Management in the Hospitaller Order of St John of God, Introduction: *Our Order, as an organization, cannot remain aloof from all this, and for this reason the concept of Charismatic Management has emerged in order to try to jump on the corporate management bandwagon, as it is understood today, while preserving the principles and the characteristics which define our institution. Because ultimately the foundations of what we call our Charism is made up of those Principles, Values and Characteristics which most specifically define us.*



To practise the new Hospitality we have to rethink the way we cooperate in the St John of God Family, for we propose the following:

1. To cooperate with organisations working in the field of health care which can help us in technical and financial terms without betraying the values of the Church and our Charism.
2. To strengthen twinning between Provinces and similar apostolic centres.
3. Cooperation, which can help us to support our projects, formation and know-how transfer.
4. To bear in mind national health care policies.
5. To remain faithful to our Charism.



1. Step up the twinning that already exists in the Order in order to ensure that our know-how and successful experiences in every country in which the Order is present can become better known and disseminated among the other centres, and thereby consolidate the hospitaller mission.
2. Create a structure similar to Juan Ciudad to gather and monitor the opportunities and possibilities open to the Order, dedicated to sounding out the possibilities that exist in the various regions in which we are present.



1. As a consequence of the General Chapter 2019, the Order strategically develops and implements a program of mission cooperation across provinces focusing a critical regional and global unmet needs.



1. Enhance the sensitivity of all the Co-workers in our centres to international cooperation; foster international voluntary service in the developing countries in which the Order is present.
2. Step up twinning between centres and other types of cooperation to facilitate the exchange of Co-workers, formation (professional, vocational and managerial), project financing...
3. Cooperate with other organisations working in in the field of development cooperation.
4. Continue improving fundraising structures for the developing (or less favoured) countries.



1. In an era of populist national leadership, what new framework will support rather than hinder global collaboration within the Order?
 - 1.1. For example, the difficulty of international money transfers, due to heightened security and scrutiny coupled with the difficulty of transferring personnel who cross international borders. This can hinder plans for scholastic-professional training.
 - 1.2. The need for resources for the active and aging Brothers for their human and apostolic development.
 - 1.3. International cooperation would be enhanced by augmenting the resources to move the mission to a higher level of efficiency and proficiency.
 - 1.4. The need for collaboration with other like-minded organizations recognising our Catholic identity.

2. The ability to share best practices is a good starting point. International cooperation should not only be about financial resources, but enhancing quality and continuity of care, based on a protocol of integrated social and health care systems.
 - 2.1. The Mission of the Order continues to proclaim the Good News by carrying on the healing ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, it is desirable that the ministries of a Province be adequately resourced and have a prophetic and vibrant vision to achieve the desired outcome.
 - 2.2. Identify the resources the active and aging Brothers will need to meet their future human, professional and apostolic requirements.

Declaration by the Co-workers attending the General Chapter-Rome, January 2018

Dear Brother Capitulars of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God:

We, Co-workers of the Order, wish to express our gratitude for having been able to attend this Chapter; we feel honoured and proud for having been chosen to undertake, enthusiastically, with commitment and co-responsibility, the future shaping of hospitality together.

We also wish to express our thanks to the Organising Commission for hosting us and accompanying us over these days together.

We are mindful of the uncertainties, fears and difficulties of the present moment and this is why we wish to serve the Mission of the Order using our skills and talents, demonstrating that we also share the Charism of the Hospitality in our hearts. We wish to continue growing in the Charism, as living witnesses of the Order's values.

When we set about the renewal of the structures, it is crucial to guarantee the style and the spirituality of Saint John of God in the Apostolic Centres.

We trust in your confidence in us, and we wish to work united, respecting our differing roles in managing the centres and in other initiatives which are designed to respond to the new poverties and the new challenges, which must strengthen the social face of the Order.

This makes it imperative to treasure and demonstrate visibility the story of Hospitality as the living wellspring of our identity in the Hospitaller Family.

We urge the General Curia to explore various ways and means to permit greater and more enriching participation on the part of our fellow Co-workers in the future General Chapters.

On our part, we urge you to find ways of overcoming the internal institutional barriers and thereby enable us to seize on the challenge which the future is throwing down to us, more united and stronger.

This being so, we wish to share the following message with you: "God sends his best soldiers into the most difficult battles;" we are not afraid.

We are confident that "St John of God would be happy looking down from heaven to see how his consecrated sons and his co-workers are working together and sharing his desire to host in our souls the pain of those who have to bear a burden which is sometimes more than they can bear, even before we host them in our houses" (Pastoral care in the manner of Saint John of God, Rome 2012.)

Let us work together for the future of Hospitality!

Many thanks, with our fraternal best wishes.

**ADDRESS BY
THE SUPERIOR GENERAL, BROTHER JESÚS ETAYO TO POPE FRANCIS**

Most Holy Father,

The Order and the whole Hospitaller Family of St John of God are deeply grateful to you for your invitation to be with you today, in this last stage in our 69th General Chapter being celebrated here in Rome from 14 January to 5 February, on the theme “Shaping the Future of Hospitality”.

On behalf of all my Brothers and all the members of our Family, I would like to thank you especially for your testimony of faith and service, which is a source of encouragement to us, and a challenge to renew ourselves at all times and to persevere in our lives as Hospitaller Brothers at the service of the sick, the poor and the needy, as you yourself said in your Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, caring for the vulnerable of the earth (cf. EG 209). Your concern for the most vulnerable and those most frequently cast-out and forgotten by our society, sons of God and our brothers, is a prophetic reminder to ourselves as Brothers of Saint John of God of the mission which our Lord and the Church have committed to us, and which we are called to share.

Those who have come to be with you today are the members of our General Chapter. Brothers of Saint John of God, a few Brothers from our Rome Communities and a number of Co-workers who are helping us over these days. At the present Chapter and in a spirit of discernment, we are praying to Our Lord to grant us His light to enable us to respond to the challenges that face us today, with the sole intention of remaining faithful to the Gospel, the Church and to our Founder, in all the places where our Institute is present.

The smiling faces which you can see here today from different countries and cultures, demonstrate the diversity of our Order and the Church. We represent many more people, Religious and Lay, professionals and volunteers, benefactors and friends, who make up the Saint John of God family: all of them serving hospitality according to the great Gospel icon of the Good Samaritan, as practised by Saint John of God, Saint John Grande, Saint Benedict Menni, Saint Richard Pampuri, the 90 Blessed Hospitaller Martyrs in Spain and Colombia, the Blessed José Olallo Valdés in Cuba and Eustace Kugler in Germany. All these are examples and witnesses to us to remain faithful to our charism and to serving God and the suffering.

Living and practising hospitality is our way of being in the Church, for the Church and for the world. In these times of globalisation and migration, the right social, human, ethical and religious response needed by our contemporary world is *hospitality*, which in our Order is symbolised by the *pomegranate*. This is why we wish to offer you a tree, a pomegranate tree, which we would like to have planted somewhere in the Vatican Gardens.

We meet so many lonely, poor, sick, jobless, excluded, despairing, exploited people. They are the same people who John of God encountered almost 500 days ago in Granada, albeit with other features and in other ways. Moved by God’s merciful love, he had a sudden crisis and then devoted his life to serving the needy, to show them the merciful and hospitaller love of God for the most vulnerable. Today, we continue heeding the same call of the Holy Spirit and this is our way of living and proclaiming the joy of the Gospel.

Once again, I offer you my thanks, beloved Holy Father, and in the name of all of us and the whole Hospitaller Family, I assure you of our support, faithfulness and prayers for you personally and for the Church, while thanking you for the mission which you are performing in the Church, and for the testimony which you are constantly offering all the faithful and the whole world.

As we end our visit, which comes on the eve of the World Day of Consecrated Life, the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord, with profound gratitude I ask you for your blessing on all the sick, poor and needy people who have entrusted themselves to us throughout the world, and on all the Brothers and Co-workers of our Order, and on those of us who are present here today.

Papal Audience for the participants attending the General Chapter

At 11.15 this morning, in the Sala Clementina and in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, received the participants attending the 69th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God (Fatebenefratelli) on the theme “Shaping the Future of Hospitality” sitting in Rome, from 14 January to 6 February 2019.

The Holy Father’s delivered this address to them in the course of the meeting:

Address by the Holy Father

Dear Brothers,

I am delighted to receive today as you celebrate the 69th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God. I wish to thank you for what you are, and for what you are doing in the various ways in which you express your charism. I thank the Superior General for his words at the beginning of our meeting. And I urge you to focus on three things: *discernment, closeness-hospitality, and shared mission.*

Discernment. This is a fundamental attitude in the life of the Church and in Consecrated Life. Gratefully calling to mind our past – as we are invited to we by today’s Liturgy of the Word – passionately living in the present, while hopefully embracing the future – the three objectives set for the Year of Consecrated Life would be impossible without adequate discernment. Looking back to the past, discernment allows us to purify our history and our charism, separating the wheat from the chaff, and focus our attention on essentials. Looking back to the past, we also return to the encounter with our first love. Looking to the present, discernment drives us to live through the present time with a passion that must be the distinctive feature of consecrated life, which supersedes routine and mediocrity, and transforms our *passion* for Christ into *compassion*, keeping attuned to the sufferings and needs of humanity. Looking ahead to the future, discernment will enable you to ensure that your charism of hospitality and care will continue to bear fruit, confronting the newly-arising challenges that you will encounter. Discernment has its roots in an historical dimension.

My wish is that this Chapter will remain in the heart and the memory of your Congregation as an experience of dialogue and discernment, listening to the Holy Spirit and to your Brothers and Co-workers, without ever succumbing to the temptation of self-referencing which would only lead to inward-lookingness. I ask you to avoid allowing the Hospitaller Order to become a private army, a private preserve. Working together, engage in dialogue and debate, planning the present and the future of your life and mission, drawing on your roots, at all times heeding the voices of so many sick people and those who need you, following the example of Saint John of God and always remaining impassioned about God and compassionate about the sick and the poor.

The second attitude is *closeness-hospitality*. Passion and compassion are strengths that flow from the Holy Spirit, that will imbue your Hospitaller mission with meaning, animate your spirituality and heighten the quality of your fraternal life in community. No consecrated man or woman and no baptised Christian can feel genuine compassion for others unless they have a loving passion for Jesus. And passion for Christ drives us on to prophecy about compassion. May the cause of

humanity resonate in you as God's cause. When this is so, and mindful of being one family, you will be able to place yourselves at all times at the service of a wounded and sick world.

Surrounded by so many signs of death, look to the Gospel figure of the Good Samaritan (*Lk 10,15-37*). He does not appear to be a wealthy man, and does not have any powerful backing behind him, and only seems to own his saddlebag: but he has his eyes peeled, and in the depths of his very being, his heart is beating at the same rate as his neighbour's. Confronted by an urgent need he reaches out his hand to the man in need of it, he shelves his plans and breaks off his journey. His concern for his endangered neighbour's life brings out the best of his humanity and leads him to lovingly pour oil and wine on the wounds of the man he has found half-dead.

Concealed within this act of pure altruism and great sense of humanity lies the secret of your identity as Hospitallers. Allowing yourselves to become involved by your neighbour, and in your Samaritan act of pouring oil and wine in the wound with the man who had fallen among thieve, will enable you to discover the brand which marks out your identity. A brand mark which will lead you on, ensuring that the merciful presence of Jesus who identifies with the poor, the sick and the needy, and is dedicated to serving them, will continue to live on in time. This means that you will be able to perform your mission of proclaiming and building up the Kingdom among the poor and sick. By your testimony of life and your apostolic works, you provide care for the poor and the needy, "with a preference for the poorest" (cf. *General Constitutions*, art. 5), and you foster the pastoral care of the sick.

The Samaritan *took care* of the wounded man. "*Taking care*" has both a human and a spiritual dimension. Jesus wants us to reach out to touch human misery, to touch His flesh in the flesh of those who are suffering in body and spirit. To touch, in order to be touched. That will do us so much good! Then your life will be transformed into the icon of God's heartfelt mercy, by being configured with the compassionate and merciful Christ who went through the world doing good to all (cf *Acts 10,38*) and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness (cf *Mt 4,23*).

Bearing all this in mind, I urge you to embark, calm and collected, on discerning your structures. Your structures must be "inns" – like the one in the parable of the Good Samaritan – serving life, places in which particularly the sick and the poor feel welcome. And you could not do better than often ask yourselves how to preserve the memory of these structures which came into being as the expression of your charism, so that they will always remain at the service of tenderness and care that we owe to the rejected victims of society. I urge you to establish "Samaritan" networks for the benefit of the weakest, especially caring for the sick poor, and to ensure that yours are always open and welcoming communities, in order to globalise compassionate solidarity.

The third word is *Shared mission*. This is a real emergency today, and not only because we are experiencing a time of a dearth of vocations, but also because our charisms are gifts to the whole Church and to the world. Regardless of ages and numbers, the Holy Spirit always gives rise to a renewed fruitfulness through sound discernment, and enhances collective formation to give the Religious and the Laity a missionary heart that rejoices in the experience of Christ's salvation and shares it as consolation and compassion, even if we run the risk of getting soiled by the mud in the street (cf *Evangelii gaudium*, 45).

And I urge you to take good care of your formation, without neglecting the formation of the Laity in the charism, spirituality and mission of Christian hospitality, so that they may also acquire a

great sense of belonging, and in their work they may never fail to bear witness to the spirituality which nurtured the life of Saint John of God.

Dear Brothers, carry the compassion and mercy of Jesus to the sick and the most needy. Break out of yourselves, overcome your limitations, problems and difficulties, and close ranks with others in a caravan of solidarity. May your sons and your daughters prophesy, and your old men never cease to dream (cf *Joel* 2.28). Go with my blessing, and never forget to pray for me.

69th GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

CLOSING ADDRESS

Brother Jesús Etayo
Superior General
5 February 2019

1. Introduction

Dear Brothers and Co-workers of the Hospitaller Family of St John of God,

We have reached the end of our 69th General Chapter, under the title, *“Shaping the future of Hospitality”* which we have been celebrating in Rome for the past three weeks in *Villa Aurelia* by the General House of the Dehonian Fathers, who have kindly placed their chapel at our disposal where we have been able to celebrate Mass every day, and where our Lord has nurtured our spiritual lives and guided us during our deliberations.

Building up and shaping Hospitality with our eyes on the future requires all of us to renew our vocation every day, responding to Our Lord’s command to go forth and perform the mission of Hospitality, at the service of the poor, the sick and the needy. We have so many good things in our charism and our mission to enable us to build together at all times, and so we need to build and rebuild the ways in which we have to respond to the challenges and the needs to be addressed, so that our House, that is to say our Order and our Family, will remain forever ready and willing. We need to move beyond the ways things used to be done in the past, and which are no longer not fit for purpose today, and which have blurred the response we are being called to make today.

We have worked very hard throughout this Chapter in which, guided by the Holy Spirit, we have sought to discern Our Lord’s will. I want the results of our Chapter to bear abundant and high quality fruit for our future, and to open up a period of light and hope for the Church and for all the members of our Order and our Family of Saint John of God.

Once again, I would like to thank all of you for the trust you have placed in me by re-electing me as the Superior General. I have accepted it and I experience it as Our Lord’s will, calling me to continue performing this service to the Church and the Order. It places a great burden of responsibility on my shoulders, which I am taking on with faith and hope. I acknowledge my weaknesses and my limitations, and I have therefore placed my total trust in our Lord, knowing that having called me to this service, He will accompany me and support me, as He has always done until today. I have also commended this Sexennium to the protection of Our Mother, Our Lady of the Patronage and Patron of the Order, and I pray for the protection of Saint John of God, our Founder, and all our Brother Saints and Beati.

Obviously I can do nothing by myself. You have given me a General Council, at which we shall all be working to the best of our ability to respond to what is being demanded of us, and of course we will need the help, the support and the prayers of all the Brothers and Co-workers, and the whole Family of the Order, for this is the only way, working in communion and practising joint responsibility, that we will be able to perform our mission of animation and governance of the Order.

2. Faithful to Jesus Christ in the manner of Saint John of God

Our edifice is held together by Jesus Christ and the Gospel. We are followers of Jesus, and we wish to respond to Him by consecrating our lives in Hospitality as St John of God dedicated his, for he is the source of inspiration for all of us.

Every day, Our Lord renews his call to follow him, to be the light and the salt of the earth, to be prophets of Gospel-inspired Hospitality. This is why we need to meet our Lord in prayer and in the Eucharist every day, to feed our spiritual lives and strengthen our bonds of fraternal communion. Without this daily experience, we shall run the risk of seeing our house and our lives collapsing, and travel in the wrong direction. Meeting the Brothers, the Co-workers and particularly the sick and needy, are also special occasions for meeting Jesus Christ, if we take great care to live our lives in a spirit of faith and discernment.

Saint John of God stands as an example to all of us. In him, we have an excellent benchmark to be used as a model for ourselves because of the meaningfulness of his personal experience of God in his life, and in ours. He received the charism and mission of Hospitality. *“Place your trust in Jesus Christ alone... God before all things and above all the things of this world”* (2 Duchess of Sessa 7). *“Love Our Lord Jesus Christ above all the things of this world, because however much you may love him, he loves us more”* (Luis Bautista 15). He experienced Our Lord’s merciful love in his life, which enabled him to love and to show infinite mercy to the poor, sick and needy people whom he met along the way, identifying with the poor and vulnerable Christ. Making himself poor, and living like them in poverty, thereby re-living one of the most beautiful pages in the Gospel: the parable of the Good Samaritan. *“Always have charity, because where there is no charity, there is no God, even though God is everywhere”* (Luis Bautista 15).

My Dear Brothers, like Saint John of God we are also sharing in that same experience, and our lives find their meaning and significance by thanking Our Lord every day for having called us to accept our vocation and to consecrate ourselves to the charism the Hospitality. This experience of God’s merciful love for each and every one of us is a wellspring of life for us, and we must ensure that our lives undergo a constant process of personal growth and conversion, leading us to identify ever more closely with the poor and vulnerable Christ. The signs which will help us to discern this growth process include a life of poverty and austerity, and the total giving of all we are and all we have on behalf of the poor, the sick and needy people of our age to whom the Lord is sending us to take to them his love and his mercy, life and and to proclaim his salvation.

I urge the whole Hospitaller Family, Brothers, Co-workers and Volunteers to earnestly live their vocation to the hospitality of the Gospel in the manner of St John of God. The needs are many, and many are the people, our own brothers and sisters, who are suffering for so many different reasons. We cannot obviously get through to all of them, for the mission is arduous. Firmly anchored in our Lord and filled with the joy of the love in which He holds us, let us reach out beyond ourselves to practise hospitality every day, giving the best of what we are and what we possess. And let us do this by opening up our Communities and our Order to all those wish to do good to the poor and the sick, to other Church institutions and in civil society, remembering the words of our Founder: *“Since we are all working the same purpose, each one on our own paths on according to vocation to which we have been called by God, we should all help one another”* (2 Gutierre Lasso,11).

3. Pope Francis’s Message to the Hospitaller Order of St John of God

On the first day of February, we were all given an unforgettable experience by being received in private audience by Pope Francis. It was an emotional morning because it gave us the opportunity to be with him, to listen to him, and to greet him personally. We thanked him for his kind invitation, for giving us his hospitality in the Vatican, despite the many concerns and matters that we know he has on his busy agenda.

The most important thing was his message to us. It was a text written exclusively for us. It was message of great depth and enlightenment, which we should all bear in mind for the life of our Order and our Hospitaller Family. I would like to add that together with the lines of action we have adopted at the Chapter, our General Government intends the message of the Holy Father to form part of our programme for the coming years.

I do not wish to repeat the whole message because all of us are familiar with it. But I would like simply to draw attention to a few words. He divided his address into three parts: discernment, closeness-hospitality and the shared mission.

On the subject of discernment, he wanted this to be an attitude present throughout our Chapter. The Pope asked us to ensure that this is a constant attitude in the life of our Order and in the lives of each of its members: *It is my wish that this Chapter will remain in the heart and the memory of your Congregation as an experience of dialogue and discernment, listening to the Holy Spirit and to your Brothers and Co-workers, without ever succumbing to the temptation of self-referencing which would only lead to inward-lookingness. I ask you to avoid allowing the Hospitaller Order to become a private army, a private preserve. Working together, engage in dialogue and debate, planning the present and the future of your life and mission, drawing on your roots, at all times heeding the voices of so many sick people and those who need you, following the example of Saint John of God and always remaining passionate about God and compassionate towards the sick and the poor..*

Hospitality, he reminded us, invites us to look to the example of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10, 25-37). *Confronted by an urgent need he reaches out his hand to the man in need of it, he shelves his plans and breaks off his journey, which marks out your identity. A brand mark which will lead you on, ensuring that the merciful presence of Jesus who identifies with the poor, the sick and the needy, and is dedicated to serving them, will continue to live on in time. This means that you will be able to perform your mission of proclaiming and building up the Kingdom among the poor and sick. By your testimony of life and your apostolic works, you provide care for the poor and the needy, "with a preference for the poorest" (cf. General Constitutions, art. 5), and you foster the pastoral care of the sick.*

He also urges us to conduct a calm discernment regarding our structures: *I urge you to embark, calmly and serenely, on discerning your structures. Your structures must be "inns" – like the one in the parable of the Good Samaritan – serving life, places in which particularly the sick and the poor feel welcome. I urge you to create "Samaritan" networks for the benefit of the weakest, especially caring for the sick poor, and to ensure that your communities are always open and welcoming, in order to globalise compassionate solidarity.*

He tells us that the shared mission is a matter of urgency: *Regardless of ages and numbers, the Holy Spirit always gives rise to a renewed fruitfulness through sound discernment, and enhances collective formation to give the Religious and the Laity a missionary heart that rejoices in the experience of Christ's salvation and shares it as consolation and compassion, even if we run the risk of getting soiled by the mud in the street (cf. Evangelii gaudium, 45).* And I urge you to take good care of your formation, without neglecting the formation of the Laity in the charism, spirituality and mission of Christian hospitality, so that they may also acquire a great sense of belonging, and in their work they may never fail to bear witness to the spirituality which nurtured the life of Saint John of God. Dear Brothers, carry the compassion and mercy of Jesus to the sick and the most needy. Break out of yourselves, overcome your limitations, problems and difficulties, and close ranks with others in a caravan of solidarity. May your sons and your daughters prophesy, and your old men never cease to dream (cf. Joel 2.28).

All these are the key issues that we addressed at our General Chapter, and Pope Francis has given us further enlightenment. It is now our responsibility to move in this direction to ensure that our charism and mission are renewed, rejuvenated and able to shed more light on the Church and the world.

4. Crucial challenges facing the General Government over the coming years

As I just mentioned, the lines of action approved by the Chapter and the Message of Pope Francis will constitute the core of what will lead the General Government forward in the coming years. I believe that both are mutually complementary, and certainly Pope Francis's words will help us to discern, clarify and boldly deal with a number of issues that our Chapter was not able to address. I would therefore like to point to one or two of these challenges which I consider to be of crucial importance, on which the General Government will be placing particular emphasis over the next six years:

a) Animating the life of the Brothers and the Communities

This, to me, is a fundamental challenge and was given particular emphasis at the Chapter. Living our life with the joy of the Gospel and with passion, and nurturing our spiritual and fraternal life, constitute a permanent and, at this particular time, an essential challenge as well. Our

consecration requires us to place everything at the service of the Kingdom, as witnesses and bearers of light to those who see us, particularly our Co-workers and Volunteers and the sick and needy people we care for. In addition to the need to overcome self-referencing we must overcome other attitudes such as discouragement and individualism. At the community level, we must discover the great gift of fraternity which is also an essential part of our life and our mission. We must combine all this, but there are certain minimum standards which we can no longer accept. I urge you to be creative in seeking new ways of living fraternity, setting aside all inward-lookingness and opening up our communities to any laypeople who wish to share fraternity with us. At the apostolic level, as Brothers, we are called, young and old alike, to live the experience of the Good Samaritan according to our possibilities and responsibility, each in our own place, without forgetting that we must value and endeavour to ensure that we are present by the side of the sick.

This being so, Vocations Promotion and Initial Formation are two priorities on which we must continue to work carefully, without forgetting that Vocations Promotion and Vocational Pastoral Care is a crosscutting concern running throughout every sphere of the Order's life. It is pointless to appoint an official or even a whole team if our communities and our individual witness, and indeed the very identity of our Apostolic Centres, do not also reflect what is expected of us. In Vocations Promotion and Vocational Pastoral Care we must also ensure that we are present with our Co-workers, not only to allow them to help us on our Vocations Promotion teams, but also to promote the vocation to Hospitality among our Co-workers.

Continuing Formation is certainly essential if we are to enhance everything to do with our consecrated life. This was also pointed out at the General Chapter. Continuing Formation must be designed to foster everything which helps us to renew our identity as consecrated Brothers and to live that identity in every respect. For this very reason, during this Sexennium, and especially in the first part, all the Provinces must implement a plan for the spiritual renewal of the life of the Brothers which will help us to enhance our spiritual life, community life, and the performance of the mission of hospitality at the service of the sick and needy.

b) *The Hospitaller Family of St John of God*

I believe that we had have made strides ahead in recent years and we must continue to grow. The Pope also asks us do so in his Message, as do other Church documents, particularly the CVCISVA document on *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church* (38). We have to continue driving the Schools of Hospitality in every Province so that our Co-workers can become imbued with the philosophy, values and identity of the Order. But we must also make progress in sharing with them not only our mission and our apostolic activities, but also our charism and spirituality. For this is the only way to guarantee the charismatic identity of our Centres and their charismatic management.

Additionally, we have to make progress in sharing responsibilities for the governance and management of our Centres with our Co-workers and, as far as possible, of our Provinces, Regions and our Order, too, including by giving them a part to play in taking decisions in our Assemblies and Chapters.

c) *Leadership in each part of the Order*

This is another crucial issue on which we would like to focus in the coming years. We have already touched on this in the resolutions regarding the Local Superiors, but I believe that we have to bear it in mind in every sphere. I know from my own experience that it is not easy to take on responsibility for any areas of our life today. But it is also clear that the Superiors, Formators and everyone holding posts of responsibility must have the proper training and personal and spiritual formation they need because they are called to lead a Community at whatever level, gaining moral authority, fostering brotherhood and taking care of the lives of the other Brothers in all respects as our Constitutions require, particularly number 38 which defines the Superior as a Brother who performs the service of governance. Practising hospitality, discernment and dialogue, the Superior must be concerned to ensure that the Brothers live their vocation with enthusiasm and passion, keeping alive community fraternity and helping everyone to perform our apostolic mission serenely, taking care of the more vulnerable Brothers, particularly the sick and the elderly. They must be present and always attentive, and never spend too long away from the Community, living an austere life, befitting a Brother and even more so, a Superior.

In our present situation, it will be difficult to grow in our Order without Superiors who have a leadership capability, and who lead from the front and constantly accompany the others. This means that it is necessary for them to be given the help they need, and formation and to be accompanied by the Provincial Governments.

This need for leadership also applies to our Centres, and to the Brothers and Co-workers who take responsibility for managing them.

I know that all of us have our own responsibilities, and each Brother and each Co-worker has theirs. But I am convinced that without leaders to guide us in the life and mission of the Order and our Hospitaller Family, it will be more difficult to address the challenges which lie ahead of us.

d) *Revising and discerning the Order's structures*

We discussed this at the Chapter and Pope Francis also urged us to embark on this process. This therefore forms one of the key issues to be strengthened by the General Government over the coming years. Each Province that has not yet done so, will be asked to conduct discernment on the future bearing in mind the situation they are currently in. From this moment forward, it is not only an invitation, but a need which all of us are being asked to take up.

We will have to conduct this process in each Centre thinking of the future that awaits many of them, and trying to think of new structures, new legal forms and sometimes the possibility of amalgamating some of them. We must also be ready to pool our efforts and work together with other Institutes of Consecrated Life and with other Church entities.

Obviously, we also have to do it at the level of each individual Province. Some have already made progress in merging several Provinces which, despite the difficulties, will all be completed to schedule. Nevertheless, we have to make even more progress based on the discernment that each Province must conduct, for which it is advisable to commission the services of external experts in this area. This is the way the Government will be driving ahead based on a process which each Province is expected to begin, and in which we will be only too happy to help provide whatever is needed and possible. Before the forthcoming Provincial Chapters, every Province must have already completed its own discernment process and must present it to the General Curia.

5. Our style of governance

We are just beginning the new Sexennium and the new General Definitory needs a little time to organise itself and resolve a great many matters, but I can assure you that in the coming years we intend our style of governance to be based on communion between the members of the General Government, and communion with the Provincial Superiors, and with all the Order through dialogue, acting co-responsibly, collegially and synodically.

Every one of us has a mission, of course, but today we all have to broaden our horizons and look at the Order through universal eyes, taking account of the diversity, healthy autonomy and the cultural and regional realities of the different Provinces and entities of the Order. We are all co-responsible for ensuring that our Order and our Family respond faithfully to the calling of the Holy Spirit, both now and in the future.

And we wish to govern collegially with the Provincial Superiors with whom we hold Assemblies to examine different points of interest to the Order and at which we can continue to appreciate the work which is being done in them.

We intend to govern synodically so that the whole Order can march forward together united and in communion such that we shall be placing greater stress on working by Regions as the intermediate spaces which manage and take forward the life of the Order in each Region according to their own cultural situations and their own needs. Obviously, all this has to be done appropriately coordinated with the General Government of the Order. The Regional Commissions will therefore be taking on an important responsibility for the life and the future of our Order.

6. Acknowledgements

First of all I wish to thank Our Lord for his presence and accompaniment throughout this Chapter where we have discerned the directions and the main thrusts of what He is asking us for the future of our Order and our Hospitaller Family.

I thank the whole Order and all the members of our Family who, before and during the Chapter, have unceasingly prayed for its successful outcome.

I thank all the Capitulars, and all the Co-workers who have attended the Chapter for one week. They have made a significant contribution, and once again in their final message, they have expressed their readiness and unconditional support and asked us to *permanently guarantee the manner and spirituality of Saint John of God in our Apostolic Centres...* They have also expressed their sense of hope, saying: *we have hope in your trust and wish to work united with you, respecting the different roles in the management of the centres and in other initiatives.* Many thanks indeed, and we also hope that for you this has been an unforgettable experience of fraternity and hospitality.

I wish to thank the Brothers who formed part of the outgoing General Government and the General Curia for their outstanding service and in particular I thank Brothers Rudolf Knopp, Giampietro Luzzato and Benigno Ramos for the great service they have paid to the Order as members of the General Council. I wish you all the best in the new stage which is beginning in your have been my Brothers in whom I have always found support, understanding and hospitality.

I thank all the Brothers who will make up the new General Council for having agreed to take on this service and this responsibility. Our first challenge will be to live in communion and to serve the Order boldly, giving all we are and all we have, to animate and govern the Order.

My thanks also go to the members of the Chapter Preparatory Commission and the whole General Curia Team who prepared the Chapter, coordinated by Brother Andrés Sène. You have performed in great service and I believe that all of us are mindful of it.

I am also grateful so to the Brothers who have taken part in the various Chapter Commissions: the Central Commission, the Drafting Commission, the Welfare Commission, the Liturgy Commission, the priests who have presided at the Eucharist, and the medical Team who have looked after us and kept us in good health. And thanks also to the Moderators and the group rapporteurs. You have all spared no effort to ensure that everything has gone smoothly.

Thanks are also due to Brother Gian Carlo Lopic for his service as the Chapter Secretary and Mrs Silvia Farina who has helped him draft the proceedings of each day's work, and to the Commission which supervised the record of the General Chapter Proceedings. And thanks also to the Brother scrutineers, Brian O'Donnell and Parfait Tchaou.

I wish to address a special word of thanks to Father David Glenday who helped us as the Chapter Moderator and the Brothers who have worked with him, for having brought his serenity, wisdom and good Scottish humour, enabling the Chapter to proceed smoothly. And with him I wish to thank Father John Dardis who led our Retreat on the first day of Chapter and Father Juan Carlos Martos who led the discernment for the election phase of our Chapter.

Our deep gratitude is also due to our General Curia Team who have been with us throughout the Chapter at our disposal, ensuring that everything went without a hitch: Silvia Farina, Klaus Mutschlechner and Augusto Fabbroni, and on occasions Pietro Cacciarelli. And many thanks also to Sister Antoine Soubrier who did such magnificent work on the Drafting Commission and on writing the Chapter communiqués. I thank all of you because it was a heavy workload for you and above all because you were always ready to serve us.

Thanks to the team of interpreters headed by Kathleen Elslander, Sister Maria Ahn and Sister Wheran Kee for translating the Korean language and Jerome Nguyen Duc Manh for the Vietnamese translation. Your cooperation has been crucial to making the Chapter possible. We thank you for your work, which was at times complicated and demanding, and with you we also thank Maximiliano Pocek and all the technical team for their good work. Everything has gone very smoothly indeed. Many thanks.

And we must also thank Casa Villa Aurelia which has hosted our Chapter. I believe we have all had a comfortable stay here, and everything has worked very well. We thank you for your hospitality and we thank the Dehonian Fathers for letting us celebrate Mass every day in their chapel.

7. Concluding remarks

The Chapter we are now drawing to a close has been a rich experience of universality, fraternity and hospitality. Here, and always in a spirit of discernment, we have tried to listen to the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and show us the paths along which we have to travel to continue to be faithful to our charism and our mission. I believe that we may consider ourselves satisfied because our Lord has been with us throughout, and we have found a number of essential enlightenments to steer our Order forward now and in the future.

It is true that there are many challenges ahead, but it is no less true to say that grace and the gift which Our Lord renews every day within us will give us the strength we need to take them on. And that is the key – not to become inward-looking, not to focus on our limitations, but to enthusiastically live our vocation in a spirit of self-giving by serving the Church of Jesus Christ through our charism and mission.

Our hearts must always be open and willing to give themselves to serving the poor and the sick so that our Communities and our Houses become *inns at the service of life* as Pope Francis told us. Let us find the courage we need to make this come about.

Shortly we will be returning to our homes, and that will be the time we have to practise what we have experienced here and agreed upon. We must therefore always continue to live in a spirit of discernment, so that the Holy Spirit will continue to enlighten our paths, and enable us to take the right decisions, at all times in compliance with the Gospel.

I ask you to keep all of us, at the General Definitory, in your prayers, asking Our Lord to support us and enlighten us, and to give us the gift of discernment and the courage to lead the Order and the Hospitaller Family wherever He wishes us to go.

Please convey our best wishes to all the Brothers and the whole Family of Saint John of God and tell them of your experience at the Chapter. Invite them all to live with hope and courage in this new phase in the life of our Order, and lead them forward with fraternal love and hospitality along the new paths to where Our Lord is sending us.

I wish you all a safe return home and pray that Our Lord, Our Lady of the Patronage, Saint John of God, Saint Raphael our Elder Brother, and all our Saints and Beati accompany you and bless you and all the Brothers and Members of our beloved Hospitaller Family throughout this Sexennium on which we are embarking today. Thank you.

LETTER PRESENTING THE PLAN FOR THE NEXT SEXENNIUM

To all members of the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God

1. INTRODUCTION

On 5 February we closed the XIX General Chapter of our Order and during this time we have worked on preparing the General Government's plan for the new sexennium, in the light of the conclusions and lines of action approved by the General Chapter.

We wanted to begin this new stage with a visit to Granada by all the members of the General Definitory, in order to present to our Founder, Saint John of God, this new period that we are beginning and to ask for his blessing, protection and accompaniment. They were three very intense days, which allowed us to return to the sources and to the origin of the life of our Order and to give thanks for and celebrate our vocation; during that time, we renewed our commitment to the Lord at the service of the Order, through the mission of animation and government of our Institute to which we have been called.

From Granada we returned to Rome, where the General Definitory met from the 18th to the 22nd of March in order to begin our planning work and to assign the various responsibilities for the new sexennium. We dedicated one day to meeting with the members of the previous General Government, to reflect together on some important aspects to take into account in this new stage.

The document "Lines of Action" approved by the General Chapter will guide and orient the life of the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God throughout the coming years and will constitute the basis for the planning of the General Government, the Provinces and all the structures of the Institute. It is a document that takes into account the main challenges that the Order has to face in the new six-year period and indicates the priorities as well as some proposals that will help us to carry out our mission. It is from here that we have drawn up the plan for the sexennium that we are now presenting. In addition, the General Government is working to develop the lines of action into concrete actions and activities to be conducted in the coming years, especially those that refer to the General Curia. There are others that involve the Provinces more directly, and the General Government will have to ensure that they are put into practice in each of the Provinces of the Order.

Along with the document "Lines of action", in our leadership of the Order and planning of the sexennium we will constantly refer to the Message that Pope Francis addressed to the Capitulars during the audience that he granted us on February 1st¹. It is a brief but very profound message addressed to our Order, which we believe will do us much good. I invite all the Provinces and

¹ Pope Francis. Address of the Holy Father to the General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God. 1.2.2019. In this Letter, I will refer to this address or message several times.

communities to organize meetings of study and reflection, with the co-workers as well, with a view to drawing conclusions and planning practical and concrete actions for the life of our Institute in all the places where we are present.

The General Chapter revised and approved some articles of the General Statutes of the Order. Some of them refer to the new guidelines for the management of assets issued by the Holy See, which we must take into account as we plan for this six-year term.

I wish to thank the whole Order for the trust it has placed in me as Superior General. I know that the times in which we are living place us before many challenges and difficulties, but I am ready to face them with the same enthusiasm, hope and spirit of service to the Church and to the Order that has animated me from the very first day, as I wrote six years ago. I am aware that only with the help of God and of the entire Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God will the new General Government be able to carry out the mission that has been entrusted to us. I am especially grateful for the commitment of the brothers who form part of the General Government, sharing with me the responsibility for the animation and leadership of the Order.

2. STARTING FROM DISCERNMENT TO HEED THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

Spiritual discernment is a fundamental attitude for the life of any Christian. In recent times the Church has invited us to dedicate more space and more time to it in our lives. Not only is it fundamental for the personal life of believers and of consecrated persons, it is also fundamental for communities and institutes at all levels.

In his Message to the General Chapter, Pope Francis reminded us of this with wise words that challenge us. Discernment is a permanent attitude that permeates our life, it must be at the basis of all that we are and live. It has to do with spiritual and vocational life and with our consecration, that we may live with passion and overcome routine and mediocrity. It has to do with fraternal and community life which is nourished by dialogue, by listening to the brothers and by listening to the Spirit together. It has to do with apostolic mission, for it is essential to always be mindful of hospitality as we face new challenges, heed the voice of the brothers, the co-workers and the sick, poor and needy.

Discernment will help us to not fall into the trap of self-referencing, to not be a private preserve, always looking at our problems and limitations, in order to break out of ourselves and, following the example of the good Samaritan, to be prophets of compassion, of hospitality.

It is important that all members of the Saint John of God Family grow in the *habit of discernment*, so as to be always attentive to the Lord and so that our planning and our decisions - at the personal, community and congregational levels - be always in keeping with criteria and attitudes that are properly evangelical and charismatic.

In the coming years, formation and the practice of discernment should be part of all our plans of ongoing formation. Good intentions are not enough, it is necessary to know and to be formed in the doctrinal and methodological sense of discernment, which will lead us to integrate it into the

daily practice of our life. Also at the level of Provinces and Apostolic Works, in which many decisions are made continually. Technical and professional aspects have to be taken into account, but they would be insufficient without adequate discernment in the light of the Gospel and the charism.

We all have a way to go when it comes to discernment. I encourage everyone to engage in it together and to encourage it, so that the voice of the Spirit may not be lacking in our Order and so that we may be faithful, following and practicing what the Lord asks of us at every moment.

3. GO FORTH WITH PASSION TO PROMOTE HOSPITALITY

This is the motto that the General Definitory has chosen for the new sexennium, for the next Provincial Chapters, for Canonical Visits and for all the different meetings that will take place in the coming years.

Go forth. It is a permanent call that Pope Francis addresses to Institutes of Consecrated Life (*cf. Evangelii Gaudium, 27*). He also underscored this in his Message to the Capitulars during the audience he granted us: *"Break out of yourselves, overcome your limitations, problems and difficulties, and close ranks with others in a caravan of solidarity."*

Going forth to favour the dynamic of encounter, with God, with brothers, with co-workers and with the sick and vulnerable, overcoming a life too centred on ourselves, on our things, on our houses, on our belongings, which exposes us to the risk of isolation and the loss of our signs of identity.

With passion, passionately. Go forth with enthusiasm, with the passion of love for Jesus Christ that is transformed into compassion for the needy we meet. Passion and compassion are the energies of the Spirit that give meaning to our mission. A life without passion loses its meaning, risks becoming a boring life, without horizons, without hope, and falls into routine and mediocrity. We must break from ourselves, with the strength of the love that the Lord transmits to us, in order to give the best of ourselves at the service of others, of those most in need. It is an essential challenge for our whole family today.

To promote hospitality. To keep alive and relevant the charism and the mission of hospitality that we have inherited from Saint John God is the essential priority that our Institute and all the people who form it must always pursue. Suffering, pain and poverty are a reality that accompanies humanity. *Taking care of the fragile of the earth (cf. Evangelii Gaudium 209)* is the mission of the Church, which clearly defines our own mission.

Fragility has concrete faces. To allow oneself to be affected by the pain of those who suffer is the mark of our identity, following the example of the Good Samaritan. Being with the sick and needy will help us to be witnesses and icons of God's mercy, prophets of compassion (hospitality), in the words of Pope Francis to the Capitulars.

The world today presents us with many needs and many calls to hospitality. Our response requires discernment so that all our Works may be at the service of life and always keep alive the memory of the charism, open to other people and institutes in order to create networks of solidarity.

4. THE HOSPITALER FAMILY OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

The General Chapter reaffirmed the vision of the Order as the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God, in line with what the Church has been promoting in recent years and as indicated, among other things, in the document "Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church" (CICLSAL 2015, 38). Pope Francis, in his Message to the Chapter, spoke to us about the *shared mission* as one of the core concepts that we have to promote.

He indicated to us that it is a real urgency, not only because vocations are scarce at this time, but above all because our charism is a gift for the whole Church and for the world. The Spirit always gives rise to a renewed fruitfulness, which also requires adequate discernment and joint formation, so that religious and laity have a missionary heart (*cf. Evangelii Gaudium, 45*). He encouraged us to take care of the formation of religious and to form the laity in the charism, spirituality and mission of evangelical hospitality.

In addition, the General Chapter invited us to continue to grow in sharing and in delegating responsibilities to co-workers, in the Apostolic Works, Provinces, Regions and the Order in general. Many steps have been taken in previous years, but more are required, especially in those parts of the Order where less has been done. For this, trust in our co-workers is essential, as well as adequate accompaniment and appropriate formation.

The School of Hospitality is a good instrument to welcome, form and offer the project of hospitality of the Order to the co-workers, so that they can feel active members of our Family and may be willing to assume the commitments and responsibilities that are requested of them, in line with what the co-workers who attended the General Chapter told us in their final message: "*We want to continue to grow in the charism, to be living witnesses of the values of the Order*". I encourage the whole institute, brothers and co-workers, to take a step forward in this dimension, to take care of the formation of all and to keep our identity alive, so that the Family of Saint John of God may be strengthened in hospitality at the service of the wounded and sick world.

5. IN TERMS OF PLANNING

In the following plan, we include the fundamental and customary events for the new sexennium, which involve the whole Order. No doubt there will be others that we will indicate in due course.

We include the dates on which the various meetings indicated will take place. In principle, these dates will be respected. It is possible that on some occasion, for important reasons, some of them may change. In such cases, we will inform you in advance.

The Canonical Visits will be carried out following the same dynamics of the previous sexennium. The only variant will be the commitment on the part of the visitors to periodically follow up the implementation in each of the Provinces of the recommendations made in the wake of their visit. Each visitor will contact the corresponding Provincial Superior so that he may prepare and coordinate the calendar and its details.

Every year we have planned an assembly with the Provincial Superiors, with the aim of strengthening co-responsibility, collegiality and synodality in the animation and government of the Order.

For the new sexennium we have planned two courses of preparation for solemn profession. In the event that a good number of brothers cannot attend these courses, shorter meetings will be organized with them, probably for a week or ten days in Granada. In any case, I ask the Provincial Superiors to ensure that in the years in which the course of preparation for solemn profession is not scheduled, the brothers who are to make solemn vows are given adequate time and preparation at the provincial, interprovincial or regional level.

Since the General Chapter expressed the wish to intensify regional animation, some General Councillors will spend much of their time in their own region so that they can be more present and can accompany more closely the life of the Provinces that make up each region. This will mean that they will spend less time in Rome. To facilitate this, we have planned four meetings of the General Definitory each year, which will be attended by all its members. They will last one week, which will allow us to devote more time to reflection, evaluation and other necessary aspects. Accordingly, we have also decided not to appoint an Enlarged General Definitory, unlike the previous sexennium. Our idea instead is to take advantage of some of the scheduled General Definitory meetings to invite some brothers and co-workers to help us reflect on, study and address some topics that we consider important. Therefore, there will not be a fixed Enlarged General Definitory, but we will have Definitory sessions that will perform this function.

The General Chapter revised some articles of the General Statutes and approved some new ones. In this document you will be able to see all the changes. I have highlighted the two new articles that have been approved (158 and 159). It was necessary to introduce these new articles in order to comply with the new guidelines for the management of assets recently issued by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life².

I take this opportunity to inform that the General Curia will send to all the Provinces the text of the Constitutions and of the General Statutes with the changes made and the new numbering resulting from these changes. I ask all the Provinces of the same language to agree that once they receive the texts, they will edit them and produce a final version, which will be the official one. In this way we will avoid the new approved texts falling into oblivion and other difficulties that would result from this.

6. CONCLUSION

² CICALSAL. Economy at the Service of Charism and Mission. Vatican City 2018.

At the end of this letter of introduction to the new sexennium, I wish to point out that I chose not to repeat some concrete aspects of animation and government in this new stage, which you will find in this document in my closing address to the General Chapter, specifically in points four and five: *Fundamental issues for the General Government in the coming years* and *Style of government*. There you will find a series of very important themes to keep in mind that complete this letter.

We are beginning a new sexennium, which is filled with challenges, but is also a new opportunity for us to continue giving life to the project of hospitality that Saint John of God began. I encourage our Hospitaller Family to face it in a spirit of discernment, always heeding the voice of the Spirit, and with the active participation and commitment of all in this new stage in the life of our Order.

I place the sexennium in the hands of the Lord, our Father, through the Virgin, Our Lady of Patronage, Saint Raphael, our eldest Brother, Saint John of God, our Founder, and our saint and blessed brothers who have preceded us in hospitality. May they help us to live with a passion for God and compassion for the sick, poor and needy, as did Saint John of God, our Founder.

United always in the Lord and in Saint John of God

Rome, 25 March 2019

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Hno. Jesús Etayo
Superior General



ROMA 2019

Capitolo Generale

Costruendo il **futuro** dell'Ospitalità
Shaping the **future** of Hospitality
Construyendo el **futuro** de la Hospitalidad
Die **Zukunft** der Hospitalität gestalten
Construire le **futur** de l'Hospitalité
Kształtując **przyszłość** Szpitalnictwa

LINES OF ACTION

69th General Chapter



ORDINE OSPEDALIERO | di
SAN GIOVANNI DI DIO

1. COMMUNITY LIFE: PRESENT AND FUTURE

Today's societies, and our young people in particular, are yearning for places where they can live and express their faith, in fraternity and communion. Alternative places in which peace, dialogue and fraternity reign, and where they can experience love, freedom, the sense of belonging, and the desire to forgive. Places inhabited by the presence of Christ, the giver of life.

The General Chapter has unanimously declared that our priority must be the revitalisation of our communities, which are called to be a sign of fraternity in our world. We are urged to configure every dimension of our lives with the merciful Jesus, passionately and faithfully servicing the people in our care.

1.1. The spiritual life of the Brothers and the Communities

1.1.1. When implementing the concept of the *Provincial community*, the Provincial Superior and his Council shall:

- a) Step up and foster the sharing of the Brothers' fraternal and spiritual life.
- b) Encourage the Brothers to review and revise their personal prayer lives, and propose high quality spiritual accompaniment and support.

1.1.2. Mindful of the leadership role given to today's Community Superiors, the Provincial Superior must emphasise the need to accompany and lay down a formation programme for Community Superiors, particularly with regard to spiritual accompaniment, so that they can properly perform their mission.

1.2. Composition of the Communities

1.2.1. The General Chapter considers it appropriate to address the question of the composition of the communities, in terms of the number of Brothers, interculturalism and the possibility of introducing alternative forms of community life:

- a) Where possible, the Community should comprise or maintain a minimum number of three Brothers. There are other alternative forms of community life pursuant to articles 26 and 28 of the *General Statutes*.
- b) In each of the Regions, the Provinces must endeavour to encourage these cultural and linguistic exchanges in order to meet the future needs of Hospitality in the Order.

1.3. The Mission of the Community

1.3.1. Encouraging the Brothers to be present among and involved with the people we serve will help shape the future of Hospitality. The Local Superiors, with the Brothers of the community and by agreement with the Provincial Definitory, shall therefore:

- a) Guarantee that each Brother is able to exercise Hospitality according to their personal talents and needs, both in our own Centres and outside them.
- b) Ensure that each Community is a place of total fulfilment, whose members are passionate about the mission and in which each one can bear witness to their vocation as a Hospitaller Brother.
- c) Encourage the Communities to reach out to the Co-workers and to the external environment, especially to the local churches.
- d) Ensure that the Communities are given appropriate formation in order to be ready to welcome in new candidates.

2. VOCATIONS PROMOTION, INITIAL AND CONTINUING FORMATION

The General Chapter considers Vocations Promotion, and Initial and Continuing Formation to be very important issues for our Order today. As with every other Religious Institute, the renewal of the Order will mainly depend on the level of formation of its members, as we know from the decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18.

Accordingly, for each of these themes, a set of proposals has been drafted to update them and ensure that they occupy a paramount and strategic place in the life of the Order and of each Brother.

2.1. Vocations Promotion

2.1.1. Convinced that the vocation of the Hospitaller Brother today is more meaningful than ever before for the Church in the world by virtue of the testimony to Hospitality shown to the most needy people, the General Government requires the Regions and Provinces:

- a) To draw up a Regional- and Provincial-level vocations promotion plan, and to consider this to be a top priority for the new Sexennium.
- b) To foster all possible forms of commitment to the Order's Charism of Hospitality, not only within the consecrated life.
- c) To provide modern social media tools on the vocation of the Hospitaller Brothers and the whole St John of God Family, and to establish forms of

collaboration with the local Church, other Institutes of Consecrated Life, youth movements, schools...

2.2. Initial and Continuing Formation

2.2.1. The Provincial Definitory must consider the formation of the Brothers to be an urgent priority and appoint Brothers in possession of the necessary capabilities to become Formators, by appropriately and continuously training them. This makes it necessary:

- a) To update the book *“Formation Programme of the Hospitaller Brothers of Saint John of God”*, published in 2000 (General Curia), in terms of the signs of the times today, and to draft a Regional-level Formation Programme for Formators.
- b) To set up Regional Formator Networks and foster exchanges between formation centres.
- c) To encourage the Provinces, together with the Formators, to set out in a new direction by providing the kind of information that is most appropriate for the new situations in the world and the new configuration of the Order.
- d) To make every effort to enable each Brother to feel co-responsible for the formation of the younger Brothers and the new candidates.

2.2.2. Continuing formation must also include a renewed personal and community commitment. Formation must also foster spiritual discernment and the physical and psychological well-being of the Brothers. Taking this approach, care must be given to the following:

- a) Establishing a Provincial Continuing Formation Programme tailored to meet the present needs of our consecrated life.
- b) Each Brother, by agreement with his Superior, is responsible for his own spiritual and professional continuing formation. It is crucially important for our consecrated life to maintain a positive interior readiness to undergo formation.
- c) The Provincial Definitory shall ensure that the initial and continuing formation programmes are planned and drawn up with the cooperation of experts in these matters.
- d) The issue of abuse prevention must be the object of specific formation and be regularly addressed in dialogue between the Brothers, in order to foster personal reflection and encourage appropriate behaviour.
- e) Continuing formation meetings should be fostered at the Provincial and Regional levels together with networking between the Provinces and Communities and with other Congregations, and comprise both religious and human formation.

3. STRUCTURES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PROVINCES AND THE GENERAL CURIA

When configuring our structures we must not only think in terms of retaining our Centres, but also work to make them increasingly more faithful to the Charism. For this to succeed, we must conduct discernment which will help us to identify new, effective, responsible and generous ways of working, so that the structures are truly capable of courageously expressing the vitality of our charism and our mission, and thereby shape the future of Hospitality.

3.1. Encouraging mergers or amalgamations between Provinces

- 3.1.1. The General Government and the Regions must encourage and accompany all the Provinces in the process of discerning their futures, offering them an appropriate methodology.

3.2. Organising the Order for the future of Hospitality

At the General Curia level

- 3.2.1. The General Government must coordinate and accompany the way the Regions operate to ensure that they adequately measure up to their governance responsibilities, and help the Provinces to establish juridical entities when they so decide.
- 3.2.2. The General Finance Commission will among other duties review methods whereby the Provinces finance the General Curia and implement the changes offered in the General Statutes.
- 3.2.3. In the matter of communications, the General Curia shall reinforce the international image of the Order by engaging on a reflection into standardising its various instruments (a common logo, website, social networks...), in order to disseminate familiarity with the Charism of the Hospitaller Order.
- 3.2.4. From now on, the General Curia will work in the three languages decided by the 2006 General Chapter, namely, Italian, Spanish and English.

At the Regional level

- 3.2.5. The concept of 'Region' will be developed and appropriately structured to facilitate exchanges and foster mutual support between different Provinces.
- 3.2.6. The structures must be subjected to discernment to establish a new form of governance and animation for our life and mission and for our fraternal life in

the Regions, mindful of the founding Provinces and the potential existing within the Regions.

4. THE SAINT JOHN OF GOD FAMILY

Society is evolving at an ever-increasing pace in every sphere today. These changes are throwing down challenges to the Church which our Hospitaller Order must take up by viewing its mission in a new light, taking into account the number of Brothers and the fact that the number of Centres and Co-workers participating in our mission are constantly on the increase.

The Charism we have received has shown amazing creativity, giving life to a range of Centres appropriate to different times and places. A new vision of our Order as a “Family” is becoming increasingly important. We must welcome its power as a gift of the Spirit in our age, opening us up to purposefully sharing our charism, spirituality and mission in all their depth.

4.1. Promoting the Hospitaller Family of St John of God in practice

- 4.1.1. By working on the concept of the “Hospitaller Family” and/or the “St John of God Movement”, leaving each Region free to put forward their own ideas and proposals.
- 4.1.2. By adapting programmes, courses and formation according to the Co-workers’ varying degrees of participation in the Charism and providing opportunities, such as Schools of Hospitality, to enable them to share the experience of Hospitality between Brothers and Co-workers.

5. BEARING WITNESS TO HOSPITALITY

If our lives and our Centres are to bear witness to Hospitality in the eyes of people today, we must constantly review them to make sure that they are increasingly more consistent with our Charism and with new needs.

For this reason we must be prepared to change and to undertake new commitments that will enhance the social image of the Order. At the same time, we are expected to review and revise the way we express ourselves and relate to others, and how we hand on the Gospel values of Hospitality.

5.1. Promoting and improving our Centres’ Christian and charismatic identity

- 5.1.1. We must seek new ways of fostering our Christian identity in compliance with the law, and enhance cooperation with the local Church and other Religious Congregations. We must enhance our identity using external communications at the level of each Region.
- 5.1.2. By agreement with the Provincial and/or the local Superior, the managers must identify and accompany the Co-workers and Brothers to stand as benchmarks of Hospitality, and give them formation on handing on the values and the manner of care according to St John of God.
- 5.1.3. We must design coherent models for the provision of care, considering all the typical features which characterise us as Saint John of God Centres.
- 5.1.4. We need to foster the identity of the Order in our Centres, enhancing its social dimension by paying greater attention to new needs.
- 5.1.5. The document on *Charismatic Management* (Rome, 2012) shall be updated.

5.2. Giving a fresh boost to Schools of Hospitality in our Centres and Provinces

- 5.2.1. Within the Order we must establish Regional and/or Provincial-level Schools of Hospitality, consolidated and structured consistently with the Order's programmes, focusing particularly on senior and middle management. It is essential to provide formation and accompaniment to our Brothers and Co-workers in their mission of Hospitality. Accordingly, the Schools of Hospitality must concentrate on handing on the Order's values.

5.3. Our institutional ethos

- 5.3.1. We must draft a code of ethics for the Order based on our mission of evangelising the world of poverty, sickness and suffering, to provide guidance to the Provinces which, in turn, must adapt them to suit the local environments. The code must contain a number of recommendations regarding respect for Creation.¹

¹ *The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*, and its impact on the poorest countries is a challenge which human society, the Church and our Order are now having to face up to. This cry requires us to reflect on the following:

- How can the Order offer a new Hospitality as a response to the cry of a traumatised Earth and all its people?
- What can our Hospitality say to our suffering planet and to our brothers and sisters who are deeply impoverished by the increasingly serious environmental crisis?
- What does God's invitation to heed both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor mean to our fraternal lives and our mission?

5.3.2. We must also improve and enhance education in Bioethics, the ethics of economic and social management, and the ethics of research in the field of vocational training and continuing formation.

5.3.3. The Order's Centres must be secure and safe places for everyone, particularly for the most vulnerable. To ensure this, a General Commission shall be instituted in each Province to consider the issue of abuse and lay down educational, control and implementation measures to deal with any abuses which may occur.

6. STRUCTURES FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CENTRES

The Order's General Statutes invite us to create juridical structures to serve the mission if we wish to look forward to the future with a sense of responsibility. If the Hospitaller Order really wishes to address the future boldly, this reflection must also apply to the General Curia, which must decide what kind of juridical structure it needs to be able to competently coordinate and support all the juridical entities which are now being established.

In future it will be necessary to establish networks. For this reason, the General Chapter has urged the Centres to conduct a reflection at the local level to update the Charism of Hospitality, cooperating with other (religious and social) organisations, which are experts in their respective fields. All the Centres must attend to the new forms of poverty, and be creative, to enable them to create new structures that can address specific problems.

6.1. The Brother's role in the structures

6.1.1. The Brother's role must be consistent with the document on *Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church* and the other documents of the Order addressing this issue. It will be structured according to the personal and professional abilities and skills of each Brother.

6.1.2. Responsibility for the structure the Order shall be delegated to competent Brothers or Co-workers with a thorough formation in the Charism of St John of God.

6.2. Adopting new juridical structures for the Centres

How can we show Hospitaller solidarity with the blessing and amazing beauty of the Earth, and defend it in the name of the community of creation in the social and political spheres and within the Church?
Cf. Pope Francis, "Laudato Si", n° 49

6.2.1. Any Provinces which deem it necessary shall embark on a process of discernment to respond to the new challenges, creating the necessary juridical structures for the purpose. They may count on the support of the General Curia and the Provinces that have already undertaken the same process.

6.2.2. In coordination with the General Curia, a Regional-level structure shall be established to cooperate in exercising the responsibility of governance and coordinating the work of the Provinces in the Region, and to foster networking, establishing best practices etc.

6.3. Initiatives to address the new forms of poverty

6.3.1. We shall reflect on a regional structure for taking action in emergencies involving interprovincial Volunteers (Brothers and Co-workers), coordinated with the General Curia and with the support of the Provinces in the Region and with other associated stakeholders.²

6.4. International cooperation between the Order's entities

6.4.1. We shall reinforce the regional structures in order to share the responsibility of the General Curia and foster collaboration in matters of common interest between the Provinces.

7. MISSIONS, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY

Cooperation is a form of social organisation which enables people sharing common interests to work together in the pursuit of a particular goal. This type of solidarity-based cooperation must be taken further to be able to combat increasing inequality and effectively help to consolidate more fragile systems, while at the same time respecting human rights. This kind of approach must lead us to Hospitality without borders.

7.1. Animation of formation for the missions, and development cooperation

7.1.1. The present General Curia Missions and Cooperation Office, which has the responsibility for coordinating and supervising all the Order's international

² To respond to the Pope Francis's call to eradicate modern slavery and stretch out a hand to the victims by providing pastoral care, the Order will consider what kind of response it can make to this matter which is so serious in all the countries and Regions of the world where the Order is present.

cooperation work, will be further developed. Its Director may be either a Brother or a Co-worker with expertise in the sector.

7.1.2. This Office, whose mission is to create strategic alliances between the Order's Regions, will improve teamwork in the following areas:

- a) Finance and management.
- b) Projects and fundraising, communications.
- c) Voluntary service, twinning and formation.
- d) International cooperation by alliances.

7.1.3. The Missions and Cooperation Office shall reflect on putting in place a procedure enabling the Provinces to embark on a Plan of Action to respond rapidly to disasters and emergencies, both through our Centres and through other Church and social organisations, which will guarantee our presence on the ground. Accordingly, the Office will establish alliances with other institutions, by networking, to respond to requests from other organisations.

7.2. Fundraising

7.2.1. The Missions and Cooperation Office shall set clear fundraising objectives based on best practices, to harmonise and federate the work in this field internationally, guaranteeing maximum fairness when distributing resources.

7.2.2. Total transparency must be guaranteed when using donations, by publishing an annual report for the benefactors and donors.

7.2.3. One or more people may be appointed to raise funds in the Provinces where this service does not yet exist, in order to enable them to join the international network.

7.2.4. The Order shall be registered as a charity and/or not-for-profit entity in countries where this has not yet been done and where the law allows, so that they may engage in fundraising.

7.3. International Voluntary Service

7.3.1. We shall accompany and encourage the establishment, wherever possible, of a Cooperation Office to promote and coordinate voluntary service in the Provinces or in the Regions. We shall appoint a Director in the team responsible for promoting and coordinating Voluntary Service, to liaise between the volunteers and the beneficiary countries.

7.3.2. We shall assess the existing types of Voluntary Service to create a charismatic strategy and appropriate structures based on local legislation. We shall facilitate the

sending of Volunteer Co-workers providing them with all the resources they need to be able to opt for this service.

- 7.3.3. We shall ensure that the International Voluntary Service project is duly followed up, and report back systematically to the General Curia Missions and Cooperation Office to clarify motivations and evaluate the objectives.

8. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Rethinking our Centres requires us to engage on “the discernment that, in this context, looks at the direction, the purposes, the meaning and the social and ecclesial implications of the economic choices of the Institutes of Consecrated Life. A discernment that begins from the evaluation of the economic possibilities derived from financial and personal resources; which makes use of the work of specialists for the use of instruments that make possible a prudent management and control of the management that is not improvised, which operates in respect of the laws and is placed at the service of an integral ecology.” (ZENIT translation of the Message of Pope Francis to the Symposium on the Economy on 25 November 2016). The General Chapter has accordingly adopted the following lines of action:

8.1. Accounting procedures to guarantee the viability of our Centres

In compliance with the recent indications of the Church regarding the finances of Institutes and Centres, mindful of the responsibility of the General Curia and the Provincial Curias in respect of these matters, the General Chapter intends to establish a financial management system based on the following criteria:

- 8.1.1. Creating an effective economic and financial governance structure by introducing internal and external audits in every Centre and Province. External audits must be conducted on a regular basis in addition to the routine control exercised by the Provincial Bursar and his team.
- 8.1.2. The body responsible for this in each Province must study and approve every project involving substantial expenditure before seeking authorisation from the Provincial Council or the General Council, as prescribed by the provisions of the General Statutes.
- 8.1.3. Each Province shall adopt an annual budgetary monitoring system, requiring the Centres to submit annual or, at the most, quarterly, reports previously approved by the Province’s Finance Commission or competent entity according to GS163. The Provincial Bursar and his team shall analyse these reports to ensure the accuracy of the information provided and facilitate the approval of new projects.
- 8.1.4. The accounts of the Community must be kept separate from the accounts of the Centres where this is not yet being done.

8.2. Financial Management criteria

Every financial investment must be properly evaluated before implementation. The following requirements must be met:

- 8.2.1. Ethical criteria must be applied regarding the social, environmental and ecclesial environments. Investments must be evaluated by experts.
- 8.2.2. Investments must be sustainable, appropriate to the mission of the Order and be thoroughly analysed in advance, respecting the principle of prudence.
- 8.2.3. Before making any major financial investment, the advice of the Provincial Bursar and the competent entity according to GS163.

8.3. Financial and economic criteria for displaying an appropriate image of our mission

- 8.3.1. We must ensure compliance with all the financial and economic management rules set out in our *General Statutes* (nos.150-163), the Charismatic Management document, and the current documents issued by the Church.
- 8.3.2. The managers of the Centres must feel responsible for ensuring fidelity to the mission of Saint John of God, for promoting it, financial transparency and for the information *ad intra* and *ad extra* in the use of public subsidies and own resources.
- 8.3.3. An annual activities report must be published on ongoing and past projects made possible thanks to donations.
- 8.3.4. The focus must be on programmes and activities of social commitment, taking on the necessary financial risk without this being the sole criteria for decision taking.
- 8.3.5. In our Centres, the Charismatic Management culture and the co-responsibility of everyone concerned must be enhanced in the matter of sustainability and the sharing of goods.

8.4. Criteria for ensuring that our assets are managed to serve the mission

- 8.4.1. The purposes of our activities must be constantly monitored and evaluated and appropriately reported, and the needs and the projects to be implemented

must be submitted, particularly when donations are needed for implementation.

- 8.4.2. The will of the benefactors and donors must always be honoured regarding the use to which their donations are put.
- 8.4.3. Assets must be carefully managed, ensuring their best possible use and thereby performing the Order's mission.
- 8.4.4. The assets or resources produced by the Centres must never be pooled with the donations that have been given for a specific social purpose.

General Statutes:
New texts approved
with emendments bolded

1c.

The Institute was approved by Saint Pius V in 1572, being put under the Rule of Saint Augustine, and in 1586 was recognised by Sixtus V as a proper religious Order. **It is an Institute of Pontifical Right**

55b.

In this sense, **relations with the Holy See** deserve special attention at the level of the whole Order, and the local Churches where our Houses are to be found. Consequently, all the Brothers, but especially those who are part of the service of spiritual and religious attention, should cooperate with the local Church and with the parishes in whose territory our Apostolic Works are to be found, in order to be animators and witnesses of our charism in these places.

90b.

When civil law does not recognise in its own jurisdiction the aforementioned canonical personality, requirements so that the same canonical entities can be constituted as entities that possess civil juridical personality must be completed. The approval of the General Definitory must be **obtained** each time **before they are constituted**.

90d.

Also, the Provinces and equivalent entities, if they believe it opportune, can obtain necessary civil juridical personality in the form that is judged by the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council to be most suitable for the particular country, **having previously obtained the consent of the General Definitory**.

90g.

To promote our mission, it is useful to establish Foundations, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Associations or other juridical entities. **The consent of the General and his Council is required before they may be established**.

107.

d) for a Brother priest to be elected Provincial Superior or nominated Local Superior, **postulation and the dispensation** of the Superior General with the consent of his Council is required;

e) in the General and Provincial Definitories there may not be more than two Brother priests.

108.

The General and Provincial Superiors and their Councillors may be re-elected for a second consecutive term of six and four years respectively but not for a third consecutive term.

When the General Chapter must take place at the end of the first triennium, according to article 84b of the Constitutions, the offices of the General Councillors also cease.

No canonical offices and no functions may be exercised for an indefinite term. (Can 624 § 2)

The Local Superiors can be **re-nominated** for the same Community for a maximum of twelve years. Formation Centre Masters, **conversely**, may be confirmed in office **for an indefinite term**.

118a.

The General Chapter shall be celebrated on the completion of the sixth or third year after the closure of the preceding Chapter; however, for a just reason, it can begin **six months** before or after this date.

136b.

The Provincial and not more than four Provincial Councillors, whose names may be put forward by the new Provincial, shall be elected by the Provincial Chapter by secret ballot.

In some Provinces, in consideration of their geographic extension, the number of communities and apostolic works, or when sufficient reasons make it advisable, the Chapter President may authorize the election of a maximum of six Provincial Councillors.

141c, d.

With the consent of his Council, the Provincial Superior shall name the Provincial Bursar who must have completed at least one year of profession.

With the consent of his Council, the Provincial Superior shall also name the Provincial Secretary.

145.

The Provinces shall have regulations that define the organisational structure and the functions and responsibilities of each Brother and Co-worker in executive positions. **These regulations require the approval of the Provincial and his Council, and shall be promulgated after receiving the approval of General Definitory.**

157b.

The administration of the temporal goods of the Order, the Provinces, the Houses, Communities and Apostolic Works, must be carried out with the utmost diligent care, according to the norms of the universal law of the Church, of our own law and civil law, aware that the goods are a gift of the Lord necessary for our life and our mission and that their administration must always promote, defend and manifest the poverty that is characteristic of the Order.

The communion of goods between Communities and/or Apostolic Works and the Provinces of the Order and the General Curia shall also include meeting the expenses of the General Curia and the Provincial Curias in the form of a shared financial contribution set by the General with his Council in the case of the General Curia, and by the Provincial and his Council in the case of the Provincial Curia (refer to can. 635 § 2; can. 1263 § 2; Const. 14).

158. (new number)

At the general level, the Order shall have a charismatic plan and an economic directory (cf. Economy at the service of the charism and mission, n. 58). **These shall be approved by the General Chapter. It shall also have administrative rules** (cf. idem, n. 62) **issued by the General Definitory. These three documents form the basis of all the management rules** (GS nos. 162 and 185) **in the Provinces, Delegations, Communities and Centres.**

Insert a new number after no. 157 (changing the following numbers accordingly).

159. (new)

The stable patrimony comprises all the immovable and movable property which, lawfully conferred, is intended to guarantee the economic security of the General Curia, Provinces and Houses. (cf. Economy at the service of the charism and mission, nos. 38; 72)

The conferral of the patrimony of the General Curia shall be effected by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

The conferral of the patrimony of a Province and a lawfully erected House shall be effected by the Provincial Superior and with the consent of his Council and the approval of the Superior General. (cf. idem, no. 72)

The conferral of individual items to the stable patrimony shall be subject to the judgement of each General and Provincial Chapter. (cf. idem, no. 72)

New number after no. 158 (changing the following numbers accordingly).

185.

The Provinces, Vice-Provinces and General Delegations, in order to carry out a more specific application of these General Statutes, must draw up and approve a Directory **at their respective Chapters** that must also be confirmed by the General Definitory.

Add “at their respective Chapters” in each language version.

SEXENNIUM PROGRAMME 2019 - 2025

1A - PROVINCIAL CHAPTER AGENDA: 2022

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--|
| January | 17. - 23. | Provincial Chapter Austria |
| | 24. - 30. | Provincial Chapter Baviera |
| | 31. - 6.02. | Provincial Chapter India |
| February | 7. - 13. | Provincial Chapter Oceania |
| | 14. - 20. | Provincial Chapter Vietnam |
| | 21. - 27. | Provincial Chapter Corea |
| | 28. - 6.03. | Provincial Chapter Lombardo-Veneta |
| March | 14. - 20. | Provincial Chapter Western Europe |
| | 21. - 27. | Provincial Chapter Roman |
| | 28. - 3.04. | Provincial Chapter Portugal |
| April | 4.- 10. | Provincial Chapter Poland |
| | 25. - 1.05 | Provincial Chapter France |
| May | 2. - 10. | Provincial Chapter Spain |
| | 12. - 22. | Provincial Chapter Latin America |
| | 30. - 5.06. | Provincial Chapter Africa Saint Augustin |
| Jun | 6. - 12. | Provincial Chapter Africa. Saint Ricardo Pampuri |
| | 13. - 19. | Provincial Chapter Good Shepherd |
| | 20. - 27. | Provincial Chapter USA California |

2.- CANONICAL VISITS¹

Year 2019

Korean Province (China and Japan): 14.10 - 16.11. Closure 18-23.11

Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell

Province of France (Madagascar): 28.10 - 1.12. Closure 2-5.12

Bro. Joaquim Erra

¹.The Superior General will attend the closing of all canonical visits that he himself does not carry out. For the visits he will personally carry out, the Closing will take place at the end of the Visits, on the dates indicated.

Year 2020

| |
|---|
| Roman Province (Provincial Delegation of the Philippines): 20.01 - 29.02. Closure 2-4.03 Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro; Hno. Vincent Kochamkunnell |
| Western Province of Europe (Malawi): 26.04 - 31.05. Closure 01-05.06 Bro. Joseph Smith |
| Polish Province (Nazareth): 26.04 - 14.06. Closure: 15-19.06 Bro. Joaquim Erra |
| African Province of San Ricardo Pampuri: 17.08 - 13.09. Closure 14-18.09 Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon |

Year 2021

| |
|---|
| Province of Bavaria: 19.04 - 05.06. Closing 07-11.06 Bro. Joaquim Erra |
| Good Shepherd Province: 07.05 - 20.06. Closure 21-25.06 Bro. Joseph Smith |
| Province of Lombardo-Veneta: 2.05 - 14.06. Closure 15-19.06 Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| African Province Saint augustine: 28.06 - 05.09. Closure 06-10.09 Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon |
| Province of United States: 23.08 – 12.09. Closure 13-16.09 Bro. Joseph Smith |

Year 2022

| |
|---|
| Isla Tiberina Community: 24 - 28.10. Bro. Jesús Etayo |
| Vatican Pharmacy community: 14 - 18.11 Bro. Jesús Etayo |
| General Curia, Nocetta community: 28.11-02.12 Bro. Jesús Etayo |

Year 2023

| |
|---|
| Province of Spain: 16.01 - 26.03. Bro. Jesús Etayo; Bro. Joaquim Erra; Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Province of Portugal: 24.04 - 28.05. Closure 29.05-02.06 Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Province of India: 01.05 - 11.06. Closure: 12-15.06 Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell |
| Province of Oceania (Papua New Guinea): 01.11– 03.12. Closure 04-08.12 Bro. Joseph Smith, Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell |

Year 2024

| |
|--|
| Province of Latin America: 22.01 - 21.04. Bro. Jesús Etayo; Bro. Dairon Meneses; Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Province of Austria: 19.02 - 05.05. Closure 06-10.05 Bro. Joaquim Erra |
| Province of Vietnam: 01.05 - 02.06. Closure: 03-07.06 Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell |

3. OFFICES AND WORKS

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Secretary General: | Bro. André Sène. |
| Procurator General: | Bro. André Sène. |
| General Bursar: | Bro. Rudolf Knopp |
| Legal Representative General Curia: | Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Postulator General: | Bro. Dario Vermi |
| Director Office of Missions, IC + Sol: | Bro. Ángel López |
| Isla Tiberina Hospital : | Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon |
| Communication and website of the General Curia: | Bro. André Sène |

4.- GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF ANIMATION

European Region:

| | |
|---|---|
| Province of Baviera, Austria, Poland, France: | Bro. Joaquim Erra |
| Roman Province Lomb.-Veneta Portugal: | Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Spain: | Bro. Joaquim Erra, Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro |
| Western Europe: | Bro. Joseph Smith, Bro. Joaquim Erra |
| African Region: | Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon, Bro. André Sène |

Latin America Region: Bro. Dairon Meneses, Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro

Asia-Pacific Region : Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell, Bro. Joseph Smith.

**North America Region
Australia** Bro. Joseph Smith

5.- ANIMATION AND GOVERNMENT AREAS

Life of the Brothers, General Commission of Vocation Promotion and Formation: Bro. Dairon Meneses.

Animation of the Communities of the General Curia: Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon

Financial Commission: Charismatic Management, Economy, Cultural and Artistic Patrimony, Statistics and Administration, Schools of Hospitality: Bro. Rudolf Knopp, Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro, Bro. Joaquim Erra.

General commission of Bioethics: Bro. Joaquim Erra, Bro. André Sène.

General Commission for vulnerable persons: Bro. José Augusto Gaspar Louro, Bro. André Sène

General Commission of Pastoral Care and Social: Bro. Benigno Ramos, Bro. André Sène.

Office of the Missions, International Cooperation and Solidarity : Bro. Ángel López, Bro. Vincent Kochamkunnell, Bro. Pascal Ahodegnon.

6. ASSEMBLIES OF MAJOR SUPERIORS

Year 2019: 30 September - 5 October

Year 2020: 5 – 11 October

Year 2021: 25 – 30 October

Year 2022: 03 – 08 October

Year 2023: 23 - 28 October

Year 2024: 07 - 12 October

7. REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Year 2023

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Europe: | 26 Jun – 1 July |
| North America, Oceania, Western Europe: | 10 – 15 July |
| Asia: | 11 - 17 September |
| Africa: | 06 – 12 November |
| Latin America: | 27 November – 2 December |

8. COURSE OF PREPARATION TO THE SOLEMN PROFESSION

2021: 06 September -17 October

2023: 04 September - 08 October

9. LXX GENERAL CHAPTER

2025: from 20th of January to 16th of February

10. GENERAL DEFINITORIES

Year 2019:

March: 18 – 24

Jun: 03 – 09

October: 07 – 11

Year 2020:

January: 08 – 14

April: 20 -24

July: 13 – 18

October 12 -16

Year 2021:

January: 11 – 15

April: 05 – 09

July: 05 - 10

November 02 – 06

Year 2022:

January: 10 – 14

April: 18 - 22

July: 04 – 09

October: 10 – 14

Year 2023:

January: 09 – 13

Abril: 17 – 21

Jun: 19 – 23

October – 16 - 20

Year 2024:

January: 08 – 13

April: 23 – 27

July: 08 – 12

October: 14 – 19

Year 2025:

January: 14 – 16

GENERAL CURIA

PRIOR GENERAL
OF THE HOSPITALLER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF GOD
Br. JESÚS ETAYO ARRONDO, priest



Born at Fustiñana (Pamplona - Spain), 26th May 1958. Temporary profession 29th September 1977 and solemn profession 12th October 1983. Ordained priest 21st September 1985. Provincial of the Aragon Province from 1995 to 2001; Provincial Councillor from 2004 to 2006. Elected 2nd General Councillor at the General Chapter 2006 held in Rome, Italy. Elected Superior General on 1st November 2012 at the General Chapter held in Fatima, Portugal. Re-elected Superior General on 26th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 26th May

GENERAL COUNCILLORS

1st Br. Joaquim ERRA MAS



Born at Vic (Barcelona - Spain), 3rd June 1961. Temporary profession 29th September 1984 and solemn profession 23rd September 1989. Provincial of the Aragon Province from 2001 to 2007. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 26th July

2nd Br. Pascal AHODEGNON



Born at Savé (Zou - Benin), 10th April 1971. Temporary profession 15th August 1997 and solemn profession 25th May 2003. Elected 4th Councillor General from 2012 to 2019 at the General Chapter held in Fatima, Portugal. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feast day: 17th May

3rd Br. José Augusto GASPARD LOURO



Born at Sardoal Santarém (Portugal), 10th February 1961. Temporary profession 9th October 1983 and solemn profession 8th December 1988. Provincial of the Portugal Province from 2007 to 2014. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 10th February

4th Br. Joseph SMITH



Born at Newcastle (Australia), 5th September 1954. Temporary profession 31st August 1975 and solemn profession 6th September 1981. Provincial of the Australian Province from 1992 to 1998. Appointed as Regional Delegate for Asia-Pacific and North America from 2012 to 2019. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 19th March

5th Br. Dairon Orley MENESES CARO, priest



Born at Sopetran (Antioquia - Colombia), 7th May 1972. Temporary profession 8th December 2006 and solemn profession 8th December 2011. Ordained priest 26th October 2014. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 7th May

6th Br. Vincent KOCHAMKUNNEL



Born at Mattakkara (India), 30th January 1959. Temporary profession 2nd February 1978 and solemn profession 25th August 1985. Elected 5th General Councillor from 2000 to 2006 at the General Chapter held in Granada, Spain; elected 3rd General Councillor from 2006 to 2012 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy. Elected Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 27th September

OTHERS OFFICES

BURSAR GENERAL

Br. Rudolf KNOPP



Born at Kahl (Germany), 18th January 1958. Temporary profession 15th August 1981 and solemn profession 12th October 1986. Provincial of the Bavarian Province from 2001 to 2006. Elected 1st Councillor General from 2006 to 2012 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy. Re-elected 1st Councillor General from 2012 to 2019 at the General Chapter held in Fatima, Portugal. Appointed as Bursar General on 4th February 2019.

Feastday: 27th July

PROCURATOR AND SECRETARY GENERAL

Br. André SÈNE, priest



Born at Péléo Sérère (Sénégal) 15th August 1965. Temporary profession 15th August 1993 and solemn profession 7th August 1999. Ordained priest 3rd July 2004. Appointed General Secretary from 2012 to 2019 at the General Chapter held in Fatima, Portugal and reappointed from 2019 to 2025 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy.

Feastday: 30th November

POSTULATOR GENERAL

Br. Dario VERMI, priest



Born at Rovato (Brescia - Italy) 18th March 1963. Temporary profession 24th August 1986 and solemn profession 4th September 1994. Ordained priest 5th April 1997. Prior of Strmac (Croatia) in 2011 and of Venezia from 2014 to 2018 and Prior of Brescia from 2018 to 2019. Appointed as General Postulator on 18th March 2019.

Feastday 19th December

MISSIONS OFFICE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY

Br. Ángel LÓPEZ MARTÍN



Born at Casa Tejada (Caceres - Spain) 1st March 1957. Temporary profession 8th September 1977 and solemn profession 19th November 1983. He is Prior of Tiber Island (Rome) from 2013. Appointed as Director of the Missions Office on 18th March 2019.

Feastday 2nd October